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JOHN BUNYAN.

SIGHS from HELL;

O R, T H E

Groans of a damn'd Soul.

Discovering from the 16th of Luke the
lamentable State of the Damn'd.

And may fitly serve

As a Warning-Word to Sinners, both Old
and Young, by Faith in Jesus Christ, to
avoid the same Place of Torment.

With a Discovery of the Usefulness of the
Scripture, as our safe Conduct for avoid-
ing the Torments of Hell.

The NINETEENTH EDITION.

By JOHN BUNYAN.

B E R W I C K,

Printed and Sold by R. TAYLOR. 1760.



T H E
A U T H O R
T O T H E
R E A D E R.

Friend, because it is a dangerous thing to be walking towards the place of darkness and anguish: and again, because it is (notwithstanding) the journey that most of the poor souls in the world are taking, and that with delight and gladness, as if there was the only happiness to be found; I have therefore thought it my duty (being made sensible of the danger that will befall those that fall therein) for the preventing of thee, (O thou poor man or woman) to tell thee, by opening this parable, what sad success those souls have had, and are like to have, that have been, or shall be found persevering therein.

We use to count him a friend that will forewarn his neighbour of the danger, when he knoweth thereof, and doth also see that the way his neighbour is walking in, doth lead right thereto; especially when we think that our neighbour may be either ignorant, or careless of his way. Why, friend, it may be, nay, twenty to one but thou hast been, ever since thou didst come into the world, with thy back towards heaven and thy face towards hell, and thou, either through ignorance (or carelessness which is as bad, if not worse) hast been running hastily that way ever since. Why, I beseech thee put a little stop to thy earnest race, and take a view of what entertainment thou art like to have, if thou do in deed and in truth persist in this thy course. Thy way leads down to death, and thy steps take hold on hell, Prov. v. 5. It may be the path indeed is pleasant to the flesh, but the end there-

of will be bitter to thy soul. Hark, dost thou not hear the bitter cries of them that are but newly gone before? Saying, Let him dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue, that is so tormented in this flame, Luke xvi. Dost thou not hear them say, Send one from the dead to prevent my father, my brother, and my father's house from coming into this place of torment? Shall not then these mournful groans pierce thy flinty heart? Wilt thou stop thine ears, and shut thy eyes? And wilt thou not regard? Take warning, and stop thy journey before it be too late: Wilt thou be like the silly fly, that is not quiet unless she be either intangled in the spider's web, or burning in the candle? Wilt thou be like the bird that halseth to the snare of the fowler? Wilt thou be like the simple one named in the seventh of the Proverbs, that will be drawn to the slaughter by the cord of a silly lust? O sinner, sinner, there is better things than hell to be had, and at a cheaper rate by the thousandth part than that! O (there is no comparison) there is heaven, there is God, there is Christ, there is communion with an innumerable company of saints and angels: Hear the message then that God doth send, that Christ doth send, that saints do bring; nay that the dead send unto thee; I pray thee therefore that thou wouldest send him to my father's house; if one went to them from the dead they would repent. How long ye simple ones will ye love simplicity? And ye scorers delight in scorning? And ye fools hate knowledge? Turn ye at my reproof, and behold, saith God, I will pour out my spirit upon you, I will make known my words unto you. I say, Hear this voice, O silly one, and turn and live thou sinful soul, lest he make thee hear that other saying: But, because I have called, and you have refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; I also will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh.

O poor soul soul, if God and Christ did advise thee for thine harm it would be another matter; then if thou didst refuse, thou mightest have some excuse to



To the READER.

make, or faults to find, and ground to make delays : but this is for thy profit, for thy advantage, for the pardoning of thy sins, the salvation of thy soul, the delivering thee from hell fire, from the wrath to come, from everlasting burnings, into favour with God, Christ, and communion with all happiness (that is so indeed.)

But it may be thou wilt say, All that hath been spoken to in this discourse, is but a parable, and parables are not realities.

I could put thee off with this answer, that though it be a parable, yet it is a truth, and not a lie ; and thou shalt find it so too, to thy cost, if thou be found a sligher of God, Christ, and the salvation of thy own soul.

But secondly, know for certain, that the things signified by parables are wonderful realities. O what a glorious reality was there signified by that parable ! The kingdom of heaven is like to a net that is cast into the sea, &c. signifying that sinners of all sorts, of all nations, should be brought into God's kingdom by the net of the gospel. And O how real a thing shall the other part thereof be, when 'tis fulfilled ! which saith, And when it was full they drew it to the shore and put the good into vessels, but threw the bad away, Mat. xiii. 47. 48. Signifying the mansions of glory that the saints should have, and also the rejection that God will give to the ungodly, and to sinners. And also that parable, what a glorious reality is there in it ? which saith, Except a corn of wheat fall to the ground and die, it abideth alone ; but if it die, it doth bring forth much fruit, John xii. 24. To signify, that unless Jesus Christ did indeed spill his blood, and die the cursed death, he should abide alone ; that is, have never a soul into glory with him, but if he died, he should bring forth much fruit, that is save many sinners. And also how real a truth there was in that parable, concerning the Jews putting Christ to death, which the poor dispersed Jews can best experience to their cost ; for they have been al-

most ever since a banished people, and such as have had God's sore displeasure wonderfully manifested against them, according to the truth of the parable, Mat. xxi. ver. 33. to 41. O therefore, for Jesus Christ's sake, do not slight the truth, because it is discovered in a parable! For by this argument thou mayest also, nay, thou wilt slight almost all the things that our Lord Jesus Christ did speak; for he speaks to them for the most part (if not all) in parables. Why should it be said of thee, as it is said of some? These things are spoken to them that are without, in parables, that seeing they might not see, and that hearing, they might not understand, Luke viii. 10. I say, take heed of being a quarreller against Christ's parables; lest Christ also object against the salvation of thy soul at the judgment-day.

Friend, I have no more to say to thee now; if thou dost love me, pray for me, that God would not forsake me, nor take his holy-spirit from me, and that God would fit me to do and suffer what shall be from the world or devil inflicted upon me. I must tell thee the world rages, they stamp and shake their heads, and fain they would be doing: The Lord help me to take all they shall do with patience; and when they smite the one cheek, to turn the other to them, that I may do as Christ hath bidden me; for then the Spirit of God, and of Glory, shall rest upon me. Farewel.

I am thine, to serve in the Lord Jesus,

John Bunyan.



SIGHS from HELL;

O R,

The Groans of a Damn'd Soul.

Luke xvi. 19. &c.

19. **T** Here was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple, and fine linnen, and fared sumptuously every day.

20. And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate full of sores.

21. And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

22. And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died and was buried.

23. And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

24. And he cried, and said, Father Abraham have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame.

25. But Abraham said, Son remember that thou in thy life time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

26. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed; so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can they pass to us that would come from thence.

27. Then he said, I pray thee therefore father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house.

28. For I have five brethren, that he may testify

unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

29. Abraham saith unto him, they have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.

30. And he said, Nay, Father Abraham: But if one went to them from the dead, they will repent.

31. And he said unto him, if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded tho' one rose from the dead.

Verse 29.

THIS scripture was not spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ, to shew you the state of two single persons only (as some through the ignorance of the drift of Christ in his parables, do dream) but to shew you the state of the godly and ungodly to the world's end; as is clear to him that is of an understanding heart; for he spake them to the end, that after generations should take notice thereof, and fear, lest they also fall into the same condition.

Now in my discourse upon these words, I shall not be tedious, but as briefly as I may, I shall pass thro' the several verses, and lay you down some of the several truths contained therein: And the Lord grant that they may be profitable, and of great advantage to those that read them, or hear them read.

The 19. and 20. verses also, I shall not spend much time upon, only give you three or four short hints, and so pass to the next verses, for they are the words I do intend most especially to insist upon.

The 19. 20. and 21. verses run thus, There was a certain rich man which was clothed in purple and fine linnen, and fared deliciously or sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate full of sores, &c.

1. If these verses had been spoken by Jesus Christ, and no more, all the world would have gone near to have cast a wrong interpretation on them, I say, if Jesus had said only this much, There was a certain rich man which fared sumptuously daily, and a certain



beggar laid at his gate full of sores : the world would have made this conclusion of them. The rich man was the happy man, for at first view, it doth represent such a thing ; but take altogether, that is, read the whole parable ; and you shall find that there is no man in a worse condition than he, as I shall clearly hold forth afterwards.

2. Again, if a man would judge of men according to outward appearance, he shall oft times take his mark amiss. Here is a man to outward appearance the only blessed man, better by half than the beggar, in as much as he is rich, the beggar poor ; he is well cloathed, but peradventure the beggar is naked ; he hath good food, but the beggar would be glad of dogs meat. And he desired to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table, the rich man fares well every day, but the beggar must be glad of a bit when he can get it. O ! who would not be in a rich man's state ? a wealthy man, sorts of new suits, and dainty dishes every day ; enough to make one who minds nothing but his belly, and his back, and his lusts, to say, O that I were in that man's condition ! Oh that I had about me as that man had ; then I should live a life indeed ; then should I have heart's ease, good store ; then I should live pleasantly, and might say to my soul, Soul, be of good cheer, eat, drink, and be merry, Luke 12. 19. Thou hast every thing plenty, and art in a most blessed condition.

I say this might be, Ay, and in a conclusion with them that judge according to outward appearance. But if the whole parable be well considered, you will see, Luke 26. 15. That which is had in high estimation with men, is an abomination in the sight of God. And again, Job 16. 20, 21, 22. That condition that is the saddest condition, according to outward appearance, is oft times the most excellent ; for the beggar had ten thousand degrees the best of it, tho' to outward appearance his state was the saddest ; from whence we shall observe thus much.

1. That those who judge according to outward appearance, do for the most part judge amiss, Joh 7. 24.

2. That they that look upon their outward enjoyments to be tokens of God's special grace unto them, are also deceived, Rev. 3. 17. For as it is here in the parable, A man of wealth, and a child of the devil, may make but one person ; or a man may have abundance of outward enjoyments, And yet be carried by the devil unto eternal burning, Luke 12. 10. But this is the trap in which the devil hath caught many thousands of poor souls, namely by getting 'em to judge according to outward appearance, or according to God's outward blessings.

Do but ask a poor, carnal, covetous wretch, how we should know a man to be in a happy state ; and he will answer, Those that God blesteth, and giveth abundance of this world unto ; when for the most part they are they that are the cursed men. Alas ! poor men they are so ignorant as to think, that because a man is increased in outward things, and that by a small stock, therefore God doth love that man with a special love, or else he would never do so much for him, never bless him so, and prosper the works of his hands. Ah poor soul ! it is the rich man that goes to hell. And the rich man that died, and in hell, mark, in hell, he lift up his eyes, &c.

Methinks to see how the great ones of the world will go strutting up and down the street sometimes, it makes me wonder. Surely they look upon themselves to be the only happy men ; but it is because they judge according to outward appearance ; they look upon themselves to be the only blessed men, when the Lord knows the generality are left out of blessed condition. Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called, 1. Cor. 1. 26. Ah ! did they that do now so brag, that no body dare scarce look on them, but believe this, it would make them hang down their heads and cry, O give me a Lazarus' portion

I might here enlarge very much, but I shall not, on-

ly this much I shall say to you that have much of this world, have a care that you have not your portion in this world ; take heed that it be not said to you hereafter, when you would very willingly have heaven, Remember in your life time you had your good things ; in your life time you had your portion, Psal. 17. 14.

And friend, thou that seekest after this world, and desirest riches, let me ask this question, wouldst thou be content that God should put thee off with a portion in this life ? wouldst thou be glad to be kept out of heaven with a back well cloathed, and a belly well filled with the dainties of this world ? wouldst thou be glad to have all thy good things in thy life time, to have thy heaven to last no longer than while thou dost live in the world ? wouldst thou be willing to be deprived of eternal happiness and felicity ? if thou say no, then have a care of the world and thy sins ; have a care of desiring to be a rich man, Lest thy table be made a snare unto thee, Psal. 69. 22. Lest the wealth of this world do bar thee out of glory. For as the Apostle saith, They that will be rich do fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in perdition and destruction, 1 Tim 6. 9. Thus much in general, but now particularly.

These two men here spoken of (as I said) do hold forth to us the state of the godly and ungodly ; the beggar holdeth forth the godly, and the rich man the ungodly. There was a certain rich man, &c.

But why are the ungodly held forth under the notion of a rich man ?

1. Because Christ would not have them look too high, as I said before, but that those that have riches would have a care that they be not all their portion, Jam. 1. 10, 11, 12. 1 Tim. 6. 17.

2. Because rich men are most liable to the devil's temptations ; are most ready to be puffed up with pride, stoutness, cares of this world, in which things they spend most of their time in lust, drunkenness, wan-

toness, idleness, together with other works of the flesh, For which things sake, the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience, Col 3. 6.

3. Because he would comfort the hearts of his own, which are most commonly of the poorer sort: But God hath chosen the poor, and despised base things of this world, 1 Cor. I 26. Should God have set the rich man in the blessed state, his children would have concluded, being poor, that they had no share in the life to come.

And again, had not God given such a discovery of the sad condition of those that are for the most part rich men, we should have had men, who concluded absolutely, that the rich are the blessed men. Nay albiet the Lord himself doth so evidently declare, that the rich ones of the world are for the most part in the saddest condition, yet they through unbelief, or else presumption, do harden themselves, and seek for the glory of this world, as though the Lord Jesus Christ did not mean as he said, or else that he will say more than shall assuredly come to pass: but let them know that the Lord had a time to fulfill, that he had a time to declare, for the scripture cannot be broken, John 10. 35.

But again, the Lord by his word doth not mean these are ungodly, who are rich in the world and no other: for then must all those that are poor, yet graceless and vain men be saved, and delivered from eternal vengeance; which would be contrary to the word of God, which saith that together with The kings of the earth and the great men, and the chief captains and mighty men, there are bondmen or servants, and slaves, that cry out at the appearance of the almighty God, and his son Jesus Christ to judgment, Rev. 6. 15. So that though Christ doth say, There was a certain rich man. yet you must understand he meaneth all the ungodly, rich or poor. Nay, if you will not understand it so now, you shall be made to understand it to be so meant at the day of Christ's second coming, when all that are ungodly shall stand

at the left hand of Christ with pale faces, and guilty consciences, with the vials of the Almighty's wrath ready to be poured out upon them. Thus much in brief touching the 19th verse. I might have observed other things from it but now I forbear, having other things to speak of at this time.

Verse 20. And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate full of sores.

THIS verse doth chiefly hold forth these things.

1. That the saints of God are a poor contemptible people. There was a certain beggar. If you understand the word Beggar, to hold forth outward poverty, or scarcity of outward things, such are the saints of the Lord, for they are for the most part a poor, despised, contemptible people. But if you allegorize it, and interpret it thus, they are such as beg earnestly for heavenly food; this is also the spirit of the children of God, and it may be, and is a truth in this sense, though not so naturally gathered from this scripture,

2. That he was laid at his gate full of sores. These words hold forth the distemper of believers saying, He was full of sores, which may signify the many troubles, temptations, persecutions, and afflictions in body and spirit, which they meet withal while they are in the world, and also the entertainment they meet with at the hands of these ungodly ones who live upon the earth, whereas it is said, He was laid at his gate full of sores, mark, He was laid at his gate, not in his house, that was thought too good for him, But he was laid at his gate full of sores, from whence observe, that the ungodly world do not desire to entertain and receive the poor saints of God into their houses, if they must needs be somewhere near unto them, yet they shall not come into their houses, shut them out of doors; if they will needs be near us, let them be at the gate. And he was laid

at his gates full of sores. 2. Observe that the world are not all touched with the afflictions of God's children, for they are full of sores; a despised, afflicted, tempted, persecuted people, the world doth not pity; no but rather labour to aggravate their trouble, by shutting them out of doors; sink or swim, what cares the world, they are resolved to disown them, they will give them no entertainment; if the lying in the streets will do them any good, if hard usage will do them any good, if to be disowned, rejected, and shut out of doors by the world, will do them any good, they shall have enough of that; but otherwise no refreshment, no comfort from the world. And he was laid at his gate full of sores.

Verse 21. And he desired to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table, the dogs came also and licked his sores.

BY these words, our Lord Jesus doth shew us the frame of a Christian's heart, and also the heart and carriage of worldly men towards the saints of the Lord. The Christian's heart is held forth by this, that any thing will content him while he is on this side glory; And he desired to be fed with crumbs, the dogs meat, any thing. I say, a Christian will be content with any thing, if he have but to keep life and soul together (as we use to say) he is content, he is satisfied; he hath learned, if he has learned to be a Christian, to be content with any thing: as Paul saith, I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. He learns in all conditions to study to love God, to walk with God, to give up himself to God: and if the crumbs that fall from the rich man's table will but satisfy nature, and give him bodily strength, that thereby he may be the more able to walk in the way of God, he is contented. And he desired to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. But mark, he had them not, you do not find that he had so much as a crumb or a

scrap allowed unto him. No, the dogs will be beguiled, that must be preserved for the dogs. From whence observe, that the ungodly world do love their dogs better than the children of God. You will say, that's strange. It is so indeed, yet it is true, as will be clearly manifested; as for instance: How many pounds do some men spend a year on their dogs, when in the mean while the poor saints of God may starve for hunger? They will build houses for their dogs, when the saints must be glad to wander and lodge in dens, and caves of the earth, Heb. 11. 38. And if they be in any of their houses for the hire thereof, they will warn them out, or eject them, or pull down the house over their heads, rather than not rid themselves of such tenants. Again, some men cannot go half a mile from home, but they must have dogs at their heels; but they can very willingly go half a score miles without the society of a Christian. Nay, if when they are busy with their dogs, they should chance to meet a Christian, they would willingly shirk him if they could. They will go on the other side of the hedge or the way, rather than they will have any society with him; and if in any time a child of God should come into a house where there are but two or three ungodly wretches, they do commonly wish either themselves or the saint out of doors; and why so? because they cannot sit down with the society of a Christian: though if there come in at the same time a dog, or a drunken swearing wretch, which is worse than a dog, they will make him welcome; he shall sit down with them and partake of their dainties. And now tell me, you that love your sins and pleasures, had you not rather keep company with a drunkard, a swearer, a strumpet, a thief, nay, a dog, than with an honest hearted Christian? if you say no: what means your sour carriage to the people of God? why do you look on them as if you would eat them up? Yet at the very same time if you can but meet your dog or a drunken companion, you can fawn upon them, take acquaintance with 'em

to the tavern or ale-house with them, if it be two or three times a week. But if the saints of God meet together, pray together, labour to edify one another, you will stay till dooms-day before you will look into the house where they are. Ah friends, when all comes to all, you will be found to love drunkards, strumpets, dogs, any thing; nay, to serve the devil, rather than to have loving and friendly society with the saints of God.

Moreover, the dogs came and and licked his sores. Here again you may see, not only the afflicted state of the saints of God in this world, but also, that even dogs themselves according to their kind, are more favourable to the saints, than the sinful world; tho' the ungodly will have no mercy on the saints, yet it is ordered so, that these creatures, dogs, lions, &c. will. Tho' the rich man would not entertain him into his house, yet his dogs will come and do him the best good they can, even to lick his running sores. It was thus with Daniel, when the world was mad against him, and would have him thrown to the lions to be devoured, the lions shut their mouths at him, (or rather the Lord did shut 'em up) so that there was not that hurt befall to him, as was desired by the adversaries, Dan 6. And this I am persuaded of, that would the creatures do as some men would have them, the saints of God should not walk so quietly up and down the streets, and other places, as they do. And as I said before, so I say again, I am persuaded, that at the day of judgment, many mens conditions and carriages will be so laid open, that it will evidently appear, they have been very mercilefs, and mad against the children of God; insomuch, that when the Providence of God did fall out so as to cross their expectation, they have been very much offended thereat, as is very evidently seen in them who set themselves to study (Psal. 31. 13.) how to bring the saints into bondage, and to thrust 'em into corners, as in these late years. And because God hath in his goodness ordered things otherwise, they have gnashed

their teeth thereat. Hence then let the saints learn, not to commit themselves to their enemies; beware of men, Mat. 10. 17. They are very merciless men, and will not so much favour you (if they can help it) as you may suppose they may. Nay, unless the overruling hand of God in goodness do order things contrary to their natural inclinations, they will not favour you so much as a dog.

Verse 22. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: The rich man also died, and was buried.

THE former verses do briefly hold forth the carriage of the ungodly in this life, toward the saints. Now this verse doth hold forth the departure both of godly and ungodly, out of this life.

Where he saith, And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried into Abraham's bosom; and the rich man died also.) This beggar died, that represents the godly; and the rich man died, that represents the ungodly. From whence observe, neither godly nor ungodly must live always without a change, either by death or judgment; the good man died, and the bad man died. That scripture doth also back this truth, that good and bad must die, marvellous well, where it is said, And it is appointed to men once to die, and after that the judgment, Heb. ix. 27.

Mark, he doth not say it is so, that men by chance may die; which might beget in the hearts of the ungodly especially, some hope to escape the bitterness of it; but he saith, It is a thing most certain, it is appointed; Mark, it is appointed for men once to die, and after the judgment, God hath decreed it, that, since men have fallen from that happy estate that God at the first did set them in, they shall die, Rom. vii. 23. Now when it is said the beggar died, and the rich man died; part of the meaning is, they ceased to be any more in this world. I say, partly the mean-

ing is, but not altogether. Though it be altogether the meaning, when some of the creatures die, yet 'tis but in part the meaning, when 'tis that men women or children die; for there is to them something else to be said, more than a barely going out of the world: for if when unregenerate men and women die, there were an end of them not only in this world, but also in the world to come, they would be happy over they will be now; for when ungodly men and women die, there is that to come after death, that will be very terrible to them; namely, to be carried by the angels of darkness from their death beds to hell, there to be reserved to the judgment of the great day, when both body and soul shall meet and be united together again, and made capable to undergo the uttermost vengeance of the Almighty to all Eternity. This is that I say, which doth follow a man (that is not born again) after death, and is clear from that in 1 Pet 3. 18, 19. Where before speaking of Christ being raised again by the power of his Eternal Spirit, he saith, By which, that is, by that Spirit, he went and preached to the spirits in prison: But what is the meaning of this? Why thus much, that those souls who were once alive in the world, in the time or days in which Noah lived, being disobedient in their times to the calls of God, by his Spirit in Noah, for so I understand it, was according to that which was foretold by that preacher, deprived of life, and overcome by the flood, and are now in prison. Mark, he preached to the spirits in prison: He doth not say, who were in prison, but to them (in) that is now in prison, under chains of darkness, reserved, or kept there in that prison, in which now they are (readily like villains in the goal, to be brought before the judgment-seat of Christ at the great day:) But of this I shall speak further by and by. Now if this one truth, that men must die and depart this world, and either enter into joy, or else into prison, to be reserved to the day of judgment, were believed, we should not have so many wantons walk up and down the streets as there do; at least it would put a mighty check to their filthy car-

riages, so that they would not, could not walk so
balely and sinfully as they do. Belshazzer, notwith-
standing he was so far from the fear of God as he was,
yet when he did but see that God was offended, and
threatned him for his wickedness, It made him hang
down his head, and knock his knees together, Dan.
5. 5, 6. If you read the verses before, you will find
he was careless; and satisfying his lusts in drinking,
and playing the wanton with his concubines. But so
soon as he did perceive the finger of an hand-writing,
then (saith the scripture) The king's countenance was
changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the
joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one
against another. And when Paul told Felix of righ-
teousness, temperance and judgment to come, it made
him tremble. And let me tell thee (soul) whoever
thou art, that if thou didst but verily believe that thou
must die, and come into the judgment, it would make
thee turn over a new leaf. But this is the misery, the
devil doth labour by all means; as to keep out other
things that are good, so to keep out of the heart, as
much as in him lyes, the thoughts of passing from this
life into another world; for he knows, if he can but
keep them from the serious thoughts of death, he
shall the more easily keep them in their sins, and so
from closing with Jesus Christ: as Job saith, Their
houses are safe from fear neither is the rod of God,
upon them. Which makes them say to God, Depart
from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways,
verse 14. Because there is no fear of death and judg-
ment to come, therefore they do put off God and his
ways, and spend their days in their sins, and in a mo-
ment, that is, before they are aware, go down to the
grave, verse 17. And thus it fared also with the man
spoken of in Luke 12. 20. The man instead of think-
ing of death, he thought how he might make his
barns bigger: But in the midst of his business in the
world, he lost his soul before he was aware, suppos-
ing that death had been many years off: but God
said unto him, Thou fool, thou troublest thyself a-

about things of this life, thou putt'st off the thoughts of departing this world, when this night thy soul shall be taken from thee; Or, this night, they, that is, the devil, will fetch away thy soul from thee. And here it comes to pass, mens not being exercised with the thoughts of departing this life, that they are so unexpectedly to themselves, and their neighbours, taken away from the pleasures and profits, yea, and all the enjoyments they busy themselves withal while they live in this world. And hence it is again, that you have some in your towns and cities that are so suddenly taken away, some from haunting the ale-houses, others from haunting the whore houses, others from playing and gaming, others from the cares and covetous desires after this world, unlooked for as by themselves, or their companions. Hence it is also, that men do so wonder at such tidings as this; that there is such a one dead, such a one departed; it is because they do so little consider both the transitoriness of themselves and their neighbours: For had they but their thoughts well exercised about the shortness of this life, and the danger that will befall such as do miss of the Lord Jesus Christ, it would make them more wary and sober, and spend more time in the service of God, and be more delighted and diligent in enquiring after the Lord Jesus, Who is the deliverer from wrath to come, 1 Thess. 1. 10. For as I said before, it is evident, that they who live after the flesh in the lusts thereof, do not really and seriously think on death, and the judgment that doth follow after; neither do they indeed endeavour so to do: for did they, it would make them say with holy Job, All the days of my appointed time, will I wait till my change come, Job 14. 14. And as I said before, that not only the wicked, but also the godly have their time to depart this life. And the beggar died. The saints of the Lord, they must be deprived of this life also, they must yield up the ghost into the hands of the Lord their God; they must also be separated from their wives, children, husbands,

friends, goods, and all that they have in the world. For God hath decreed it; it is appointed, namely, by the Lord, For men once to die, and we must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ. As it is, 2 Cor.

5. 10, 11.

But it may be objected, if the godly die as well as the wicked, and if the saints must appear before the judgment-seat, as well as the sinners; then what advantage have the godly more than the ungodly, and how can the saints be in a better condition than the wicked?

Ans^r. Read the 22d verse over again, and you shall find a marvellous difference between them, as much as is between heaven and hell, everlasting joy, and everlasting torments; for you find, that when the beggar died, which represents the godly, He was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom, or into everlasting joy, Psal. 1. But the ungodly are not so, but are hurried by the devils into the bottomless pit, drawn away in their wickedness, Prov. 14. 32. for he saith, And in hell he lift up his eyes. When the ungodly die, their misery beginneth, for then appear the devils, like so many lions; waiting every moment till the soul depart from the body. Sometimes they are visible to the dying party, but sometimes more invisible, but always this is certain, they never miss of the soul, if it do die out of the Lord Jesus Christ, but do hawl it away to the prison, as I said before, there to be tormented and reserved until the great and dreadful day of judgment, at which day they must, body and soul, receive a final sentence from the righteous judge, and from that time be shut out from the presence of God into everlasting wo and distress. But the godly, when the time of their departure is at hand, then also are the angels of the Lord at hand; yea, they are ready, waiting upon the soul to conduct it safely into Abraham's bosom. I do not say but the devils are oft times very busy doubtless, and attending the saints in their sickness: I, and no question but they will willingly deprive the soul of

glory. But here is the comfort, as the devils come from hell to devour the soul (if it be possible at its departure) so the angels of the Lord come from heaven, to watch over and conduct the soul (in spite of the devil) safe into Abraham's bosom.

David had the comfort of this, and speaks it forth for the comfort of his brethren; Psal 34. 7. saying, The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. Mark, the angel of the Lord encampeth round about his children, to deliver them; From what? From their enemies, of which the devil is not the least. This is an excellent comfort at any time, to have the holy angels of God to attend a poor man or woman; but especially, it is comfortable in the time of distress, at the time of death, when the devils beset the soul with all the power that hell can afford them. But now it may be that the glorious angels of God do not appear at the first, to the view of the soul; nay, rather hell stands before it, and the devils ready, as if they would carry it thither; but this is the comfort, the angels do always appear at the last, and will not fail the soul, but will carry it safe into Abraham's bosom. Ah friends! Consider, here is an ungodly man upon his death bed, and he hath none to speak for him, none to speak comfort unto him; but it is not so with the children of God, for they have the Spirit to comfort them. Here is the ungodly, and they have no Christ to pray for their safe conduct to glory, but the saints have an intercessor; Job 17. 9. Here in the world, when they die, they have none of the angels of God to attend upon them; but the saints have their company. In a word, the unconverted person when he dieth, he sinks into the bottomless pit. But the saints when they die, do ascend with, and by the angels into Abraham's bosom, or into unspeakable glory, Luke 23. 43.

Again it is said, that the rich man when he died, was buried, or put into the earth; but when the beggar died, he was carried by the angels into Abraham's

bosom. The one is a very excellent stile, where he saith, he was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom; it denotes the excellent condition of the saints of God, as I said before; and not only so, But also the preciousness of the death of the saints in the eyes of the Lord, Psal. 116. 15. that after generations may see how precious in the sight of the Lord, the death of his saints is, when he saith, They are carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom

Thus many times the Lord adorneth the death and departure of his saints, to hold forth to after generations, how excellent they are in his eyes. It is said of Enoch, that God took him; and of Abraham that he died in a good old age; of Moses, that the Lord buried him; of Elijah, that he was taken up into heaven; that the saints sleep in Jesus; that they die in the Lord; that they rest from their labours; that their works follow them; that they are under the altar; that they are with Christ; that they are in light; that they are to come with the Lord Jesus to judge the world. All which sayings signify thus much, that to die as a saint, is a very great honour and dignity. But the ungodly are not so. The rich or ungodly die and are buried, he is carried from his dwelling to the grave, and there he is buried, hid in the dust; and his body doth not so fast moulder and come to nought there, but his name doth stink as fast in the world: As saith the holy scripture, The name of the wicked shall rot. And indeed, the names of the godly are not in so much honour after their departure, but the wicked and their names do as much rot. What a dishonour to Posterity was the death of Balaam, Agag, Achitophel, Haman, Judas, Herod, with the rest of their companions?

Thus the wicked have their names written in the earth, and they do perish and rot, and the names of the saints call forth a dainty savour to following generations: And that the Lord Jesus doth signify, where he saith, The godly are carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. And the wicked are nothing

worth, where he saith, The ungodly die and are buried.

Verse 23. And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

THE former verse speaks only of the departure of the ungodly out of this life, together with the glorious conduct that the godly have in the kingdom of their father. Now our Lord doth shew in this verse partly what doth, and shall befall to the reprobate, after this life is ended, where he saith (And in hell he lift up his eyes) That is, the ungodly after they depart this life, do lift up their eyes in hell. From these words may be observed these things.

1. That there is an hell for souls to be tormented in, when this life is ended. Mark, after he was dead and buried, in hell he lift up his eyes.

2. That all that are ungodly, and do live and die in their sins, so soon as ever they die, they go into hell. He died and was buried; and in hell he lift up his eyes.

3. That some are so fast asleep, and secure in their sins that they scarce know well where they are till they come into hell: and that I gather from these words, in hell he lift up his eyes. He was asleep before, but hell makes him lift up his eyes.

As I said before, it is evident, there is an hell for souls, yea, and bodies too, to be tormented in after they depart this life: as is clear, first, because the Lord Jesus Christ that cannot lie, did say that after the sinner was dead and buried, In hell he lift up his eyes.

Now if it be objected, that by hell is here meant the grave. That I plainly deny:

First, Because there the body is not sensible of torment or ease; but in that hell into which the spirits of the damned depart, they are sensible of torment, and would very willingly be free from it, to enjoy

ease, which they are sensible of the want of; as is clearly discovered in this parable, Send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, to cool my tongue.

Secondly, It is not meant the grave, but some other place, because the bodies, so long as they lie they are not capable of lifting up their eyes to see the glorious condition of the children of God, as the souls of the damned do. In hell he lift up his eyes.

Thirdly, It cannot be the grave, for then it must follow, that the soul was buried there with the body, which cannot stand with such a dead state as is here mentioned; for he saith, The rich man died; that is, his soul was separated from his body. And in hell he he lift up his eyes.

If it be again objected that there is no hell, but in this life: That I do also deny, as I said before: after he was dead and buried, In hell he lift up his eyes. And let me tell thee, O soul, whoever thou art, that if thou close not in savingly with the Lord Jesus Christ, and lay hold on what he hath done, and is doing in his own person for sinners, thou wilt find such an hell after this life is ended, that thou wilt not get out of again for ever and ever. And thou that art wanton, and dost make but a mock at the servants of the Lord when they tell thee of the torments of hell, thou wilt find, that when thou departest out of this life, that hell, even the hell, which is after this life, will meet thee in thy journey thither, and will with its hellish crew, give thee such a sad salutation, that thou wilt not forget it to all eternity; when that scripture comes to be fulfilled on thy soul, in Isa 14. 9. Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: It stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth. It hath raised from their thrones, all the kings of the nations. All they, that is, that are in hell, shall say, Art thou become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us? O sometimes when I have had but thoughts of going to hell, and consider the everlastingness of their ruin that fall

in thither : It stirred me up, rather to seek the Lord Jesus Christ to deliver me from thence, than to slight it, and make a mock at it.

And in hell he lift up his eyes.) The second thing I told you, was this, That the ungodly that live and die in their sins, so soon as they do depart this life, do descend into hell. This is also verified by the words in this parable, where Christ saith he died and was buried, and in hell he lift up his eyes. As the tree falls, so it shall lie, whether it be to heaven or hell, Eccl. 11. 3. And as Christ said to the thief on the cross, This day shalt thou be with me in paradise; even so the devil also in the like manner may say unto the soul, To-morrow shalt thou be with me in hell. See then what a miserable case he that dies in an unregenerate state is in; he departs from a long sickness to a longer hell; from the gripings of death, to the everlasting torments of hell. And in hell he lift up his eyes. Ah friends ! If you were but yourselves you would have a care of your souls; if you did but regard, you would see how mad they are that slight the salvation of their souls. O what will it profit thy soul, to have pleasure in this life, and torment in hell, Mark 8. 36. Thou hadst better part with all thy sins, and pleasures, and companions, or whatsoever thou delightest in, than to have soul and body to be cast into hell. O then do not neglect our Lord Jesus Christ, lest thou drop down to hell, Heb. 2. 3. Consider, would it not wound thee to thine heart, to come upon thy death-bed, and instead of having the comfort of a well spent life and the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ, together with the comfort of his glorious spirit : To have, first the sight of an ill spent life, thy sins flying in thy face, thy conscience uttering of itself with thunder-claps against thee, the thoughts of God terrifying of thee, death with his merciless paw seizing upon thee, the devils standing ready to scramble for thy soul, and hell enlarging herself, and ready to swallow thee up, and eternity of misery attending upon thee, from which there will be no release. For

mark, death doth not come alone to an unconverted soul, but with such company, as wert thou but sensible of, it would make thee tremble. I pray consider that scripture, Rev. 6. 8. And I looked, and behold a pale horse, and his name that sat upon him was death, and hell followed with him. Mark, death doth not come alone to the ungodly, no but hell goeth with him. O miserable comforters ! O miserable society ! here comes death and hell unto thee. Death goeth into thy body, and separates body and soul asunder ; he stands without (as I may say) to embrace, or rather, to crush thy soul between its everlasting grinders. Then thy mirth, thy joy, thy sinful delights will be ended when this comes to pass ; lo it will come. Blessed are all those, that thro' Jesus Christ his merits, by faith, do escape these soul murdering companions. And in hell he lift up his eyes.

The third thing you know that we did observe from these words, was this, That some are so fast asleep, and secure in their sins, that they scarce know where they are, until they come into hell. And that I told you I gather by these words, In hell he lift up his eyes. Mark, it was in hell, that he lift up his eyes. Now some do understand by these words, that he came to himself, or began to consider with himself, or to think with himself in what an estate he was, and what he was deprived of ; which is still a confirmation of, the thing laid down by me. There it is that they come to themselves, that is, there they are sensible where they truly are indeed ; thus it fares with some men that they scarce know where they are till they lift up their eyes in hell. It is with those people as with those that fall down in a swoon ; you know if a man do fall down in a swoon in one room, tho' you take him up and carry him into another, yet he is not sensible where he is till he cometh unto himself, and listeth up his eyes.

Truly, thus, as it is to be feared, it is with many poor souls, they are so senseless, so hard, so seared in their conscience, 1 Tim. 4. 2. that they are very ig-

norant of their state, and when death comes, it strikes them as it were into a swoon (especially if they die suddenly) and so they are hurried away, and scarce know where they are, till in hell they lift up their eyes: this is he who dieth in his full strength, fully at ease and quiet, Job 21. 23.

Of this sort are they spoken of in Psal. 37. where he saith, There are no bonds in their death, but their strength is firm: They are not troubled as other folk, neither are they plagued like other men. And again, they spend their days in wealth, and in a moment, mark, in a moment, before they are aware, they go down to the grave, Job 21. 17.

Indeed this is too much known by woful and daily experience: sometimes when we go to visit them that are sick in the town and places where we live, Oh how senseless, how scared in their consciences are they! They are neither sensible of heaven, nor of hell, of sin, nor of a Saviour: speak to them of their condition, and the state of their souls, and you shall find them as ignorant as if they had no souls to regard. Others, tho' they lie ready to die, yet they are busying themselves about their outward affairs, as tho' they should certainly live here, even to live and enjoy the same for ever. Again, come to others, speak to them about the state of their souls, tho' they have no more experience of the new birth than a beast; yet will they speak as confidently of their eternal estate, and the welfare of their souls, as if they had the most excellent experience of any man or woman in the world; saying I shall have peace, Deut 29. 19. When as I said even now, the Lord knows they are as ignorant of the new birth, of the nature and operation of faith, of the witness of the Spirit, as if there were no new birth, no faith, no witness of the Spirit of Christ in any of the saints in the world. Nay, thus many of them are, even an hour or less before their departure. Ah poor souls! tho' they may go away here like a lamb, as the world says, yet if you could but follow them a little to stand and listen; soon after

their departure, it is to be feared, you should hear them roar like a lion at their first entrance into hell, far worse than ever did Corah, &c. when they went down quick into the ground, Numbers 16. 31. 32.

33. 34 35.

Now by this one thing doth the devil take great advantage on the hearts of the ignorant, suggesting unto them, that because the party deceased, departed so quietly, without all doubt they are gone to rest and joy; when, alas! It is to be feared, the reason why they went away so quietly, was rather because they were senseless and hardened in their consciences, yea dead before in sins and trespasses. For had they had but some awakenings on their death-beds, as some have had, they would have made all the town to ring out of their doleful condition: But because they are feared and ignorant, and so depart quietly, therefore the world takes heart at grass (as we use to say) and make no great matter of living and dying they cannot tell how; Therefore pride compasseth them as a chain, Psal. 73. 5. 6. But let them look to themselves, for if they have not an interest in the Lord Jesus now, while they live in the world, they will, whether they die raging or still, go unto the same place, and lift up their eyes in hell.

O my friends, did you but know what a miserable condition they are in, that go out of this world without an interest in the son of God, it would make you smite upon your thigh, and in the bitterness of your souls cry out, Acts 16. 30. 31. Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved? And not only so, but thou wouldst not be comforted until thou didst find a rest for thy soul in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Verse 23. And in hell he lift up his eyes being in torments. and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

Something in brief I have observed from the first part of this verse, namely from these words, And

in hell he lift up his eyes. And indeed, I have observed but something, for they are very full of matter, and many things might be taken notice of in them. There is one thing more that I might touch upon, as touched in this saying, and that is this, Methinks the Lord Jesus Christ doth hereby signify, that men are naturally unwilling to see or take notice of their sad state, I say by nature; but though now they are willingly ignorant, yet in hell they shall lift up their eyes. That is, in hell they shall see and understand their miserable condition; and therefore to these words, in hell he lift up his eyes, he adds, being in torment. As if he had said, Tho' once they shut their eyes, tho' once they were (2 Pet. 3. 5.) willingly ignorant, yet when they depart into hell, they shall be so miserably handled and tormented, that they shall be forced to lift up their eyes. While men live in this world, and are in a natural state, they will have a good conceit of themselves, and of their condition; they will conclude that they are Christians, that Abraham is their father, Matth. 3. 7. 8. And their state to be as good as the best; they will conclude they have faith, the Spirit, good hope, and an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ; but then when they drop into hell, and lift up their eyes, and there behold, first their souls, to be in extream torments; their dwelling to be the bottomless pit; their company thousands of damned souls; also the innumerable company of devils; and the hot scalding vengeance of God, not only to drop, but to fall very violently upon them; then they being willing to be awakened, who all their life-time were in a dead sleep, I say, when this comes to pass, so it will, then in hell they shall lift up their eyes, in the midst of torment they shall lift up their eyes.

Again, you may observe in these words: And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torment. That the time of the ungodly men smartings for their sins, will be in the torment of hell. Now here I am put to a stand, when I consider the torments of hell into which the damned do fall. O unspeakable torments! O

endless torments ! Now that thy soul might be made to flee from these intolerable torments into which the damned go, I shall shew you briefly what are the the torments of hell. First, by the names of it. Secondly, by the sad state thou wilt be in, if thou comest there. First, the names : It is called a never dying worm, Mark 9. It is called an oven fire hot, Mala. 4. 1. It is called a furnace, a fiery furnace, Mat. 13. It is called the bottomless pit, the unquenchable fire, fire and brimstone, hell fire, the lake of fire, devouring fire, everlasting fire, eternal fire, a stream of fire, Rev. 21.

First, One part of thy torments will be this, thou shalt have a full sight of all thy ill spent life from first to last ; tho' here thou canst sin to day, and forget it by to-morrow ; yet there thou shalt be made to remember how thou didst sin against God at such a time, and in such a place, for such a thing, and with such an one, which will be an hell unto thee, Psal. 50. 21. God will set them in order before thine eyes.

2. Thou shalt have the guilt of them all lie heavy on thy soul, not only the guilt of one or two, but the guilt of them altogether, and there they shall lie in thy soul, as if thy belly were full of pitch, and set on a light fire. Here men can sometimes think on their sins with delight, but there with unspeakable torment ; for that I understand to be the fire that Christ speaketh of, which shall never be quenched, Mark 8. 43. 44. 45. 46. while men live here. O how doth the guilt of one sin sometimes crush the soul ! It makes a man in such plight, that he is weary of his life, so that he can neither rest at home nor abroad, neither up nor in bed. Nay, I do know, that they have been so tormented with the guilt of one sinful thought, that they have been even at their wits end, and have hanged themselves. But now when thou comest into hell, and hast not only one or two or an hundred sins, with the guilt of them all on thy soul and body, but all the sins that ever thou didst commit since thou camest into the world, altogether clapt on thy con-

science at one time, as one should clap a red hot iron to thy breast, and there to continue to all eternity ; this is miserable

Again, then thou shalt have brought into thy remembrance, the slighting of the gospel of Christ ; here thou shalt consider how willing Christ was to come into the world to save sinners, and for what a trifle thou didst reject him. This is plainly held forth in Isa. 28. where speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ, the foundation of salvation, ver. 16. he saith of them that reject the gospel, that when the overflowing scourge doth pass thro' the earth (which I understand to be at the end of the world) then saith he, It shall take you morning by morning, by day and by night shall it pass over you ; that is continually without any intermission. And it shall be a vexation only to hear the report. A vexation, that is, a torment, or a great part of hell only to understand the report, to understand the good tidings that came into the world by Christ's death for poor sinners : And you will find this verily to be the mind of the Spirit, if you compare it with Isa. 53. 1. where he speaks of mens turning their backs upon the tenders of God's grace in the gospel, he saith, Who hath believed our report, or the gospel declared by us ? Now this will be a mighty torment to the ungodly, when they shall understand the goodness of God was so great, that he even sent his Son out of his bosom to die for sinners, and yet that they should be so foolish as to put him off from one time to another, that they should be so foolish as to lose heaven, and Christ, and eternal life in glory, for the society of a company of drunkards, that they should lose their souls for a little sport, for this world, for a strumpet, for that which is lighter than vanity and nothing ; I say this will be a very great torment unto thee.

4. Another part of thy torment will be this ; thou shalt see thy friends, thy acquaintance and neighbours, ; nay, it may be thy father, mother, wife, husband, children, brother, sister, with others in the

kingdom of heaven, and thyself thrust out, Luke 13, 28. There shall be weeping, &c. when you shall see Abraham (your father) and Isaac, and Jacob, together with your brethren, the prophets in the kingdom of heaven, and you yourselves thrust out. Nay, saith he, they shall come from the east, and from the west, that is those that thou didst never see in all thy life before, and they shall sit down with thy friends and neighbours, thy wife and children, in the kingdom of heaven. And thou for thy sins and disobedience shall be shut, nay, thrust out. O wonderful torment!

5. Again, thou shalt have none but a company of damned souls, with an innumerable company of devils, to keep company with thee, while thou art in this world, the very thoughts of the devil's appearing to thee makes thy flesh tremble, and thine hair ready to stand upright on thy head. But O! what wilt thou do (when not only the supposition of the devil's appearing) but the real society of all the devils of hell will be with thee howling and roaring, screeching and roaring, in such a hideous manner, that thou wilt be even at thy wits end, and be ready to run stark mad again for anguish and torment.

6. Again, that thou mightest be tormented to purpose, the mighty God of heaven will lay as great wrath and vengeance upon thee as ever he can, by the might of his glorious power. As I said before, thou shalt have his wrath, not by drops; but by whole showers shall it come, thunder, thunder, upon thy body and soul so fast and so thick, that thou shalt be tormented out of measure. And so saith the scripture, 2 Thess. 1. 9. Speaking of the wicked, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, when the saints shall be admiring his goodness and glory.

Again this thou shalt have, as I said before, without any intermission, thou shalt not have any ease so long as while a man may turn himself round; thou shalt have it always every hour, day and night; for

their worm never dies, but always gnaws, and their fire is never quenched; as it is written in Mark 9.

Again, in this condition thou must be for ever, and that is as sad as all the rest. For if a man were to have all his sins laid to his charge and communion with the devils, and as much wrath as the great God of heaven can inflict upon him; I say, if it were but for a time, even ten thousand years, and so end, there would be ground of comfort, and hopes of deliverance; but here is thy misery, this is thy state for ever, here thou must be for ever; when thou lookest about thee, and seest what an innumerable company of howling devils thou art amongst, thou shalt think this again, this is my portion for ever. When thou hast been in hell so many thousand years as there are stars in the firmament, or drops in the sea, or sands on the seashore, yet thou hast to lie there for ever. O this one word Ever, how will it torment thy soul!

Friends, I have only given a very short touch of the torments of hell. Oh! I am set, I am set, and am not able to utter what my mind conceives of the torments of hell. Yet this let me say to thee, accept of God's mercy thro' our Lord Jesus Christ, lest thou feel that with thy conscience, which I cannot express with my tongue, and say, I am sorely tormented in this flame.

And seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

When the damned are in this pitiful state, surrounded with fears and terrors, with torments and vengeance, one thing they shall have, which is this, they shall see the happy and blessed state of God's children: He seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom; which as I said before, is the happy state of the saints when this life is ended. This now shall be so far from being an ease unto them, that it shall most wonderfully aggravate or heighten their torment, as I said before. There shall be weeping or cause of lamentation, when they shall see Abraham,

and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven, and themselves thrust out.

1. Observe, those that die in their sins are far from going to heaven; he seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And indeed, it is just with God to deal with them that die in their sins according to what they have done; and to make them who are far from righteousness now, to stand far from heaven to all eternity. Harken to this, ye stout hearted, that are far from righteousness, and are resolved to go on in your sins, when you die you will be far from heaven; you will see Lazarus, but it will be afar off.

Again, he seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

These are some of the things the damned do behold so soon as they come into torment, mark, and he seeth Lazarus in Abraham's bosom. Lazarus, who was he? Why, even he that was so slighted, so disregarded, so undervalued by this ungodly one while he was in the world, he seeth Lazarus in his bosom.

From whence observe, that those who live and die the enemies of the saints of God, let them be never so great and stout, let them bear never so much sway, while they are in the world, let them brag and boast never so much, while they are here, they shall in spite of their teeth see the saints, yea, the poor saints, even the Lazarus's, or the ragged ones that belong to Jesus, to be in a better condition than themselves. O! Who do you think was in the best condition? who do you think saw themselves in the best condition he that was in hell, or he that was in heaven? He that was in darkness, or he that was in light? He that was in everlasting joy, or he that was in everlasting torments? The one with God, Christ, saints, angels; the other in tormenting flames, under the curse of God's eternal hatred, with the devils and their angels, together with an innumerable company of howling, roaring, curling, ever burning reprobates? Certainly this observation will be easily

proved to be true here in this world by him that looks upon it with an understanding heart, and will clear itself to be true in the world to come, by such as shall go either to heaven or to hell.

2. The second observation from these words, and seeth Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom, is this they that are the persecutors of the saints of the Lord, now in this world, shall see the Lord's persecuted ones to be they that are so highly esteemed by the Lord, as to sit or to be in Abraham's bosom, (in everlasting glory) tho' the enemies to the children of God did so lightly esteem them, that they scorned to let 'em gather up the dogs meat that fell under their table. This also is verified and held forth plainly by this parable: and therefore be not grieved, O you that are the tempted, persecuted, afflicted, sighing, praying saints of the Lord, tho' your adversaries look upon you now with a disdainful, surly, rugged, proud, and haughty countenance, yet the time shall come, when they shall spy you in Abraham's bosom.

I might enlarge upon these things, but shall leave them to the spirit of the Lord, which can better by ten thousand degrees enlarge them on thy heart and conscience, than I can upon a piece of paper: therefore leaving those to the blessing of the Lord, I shall come to the next verse, and shall be brief in speaking to that also, and so pass to the rest.

Verse 24. And he cried, and said, Father Abraham have mercy upon me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, to cool my tongue: for I am tormented in this flame.

YOU know I told you, that verse 22 is a discovery of the departure of the Godly and the ungodly out of this life; where he saith. The beggar died, and the rich man also died. The 23d verse is a discovery of the proper places, both of the godly and ungodly after death; one being in Abraham's bosom, or in glory, the other in hell: Now ver. 24

is a discovery of part of the too late repentance of the ungodly, when they are dropt down into hell: And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me.

From the words, And he cried, we may observe, first, what a change the ungodly will have when they come into hell. He cried: It is like he was laughing, jesting, jeering, drinking, mocking, swearing, cursing, prating, persecuting of the godly in his prosperity, among his filthy companions: but now the case is otherwise, now he is in another frame, now his proud, stout, currish, carriage is come down; And he cried. The laughter of the ungodly will not last always, but will be sure to end in a cry; The triumphing of the wicked is short, Job 20. 5. Consider you must have a change either here or in hell. If you be not new creatures, regenerate persons, new born babes into this world; before you go hence, your note will be changed, your conditions will be changed; for if you come into hell, you must cry. O did but the singing drunkards, when they are making merry on the ale-bench, think on this, it would make them change their note and cry, What shall I do, whether shall I go when I die? But as I said before, the devil, as he labours to get poor souls to follow their sins, so he labours also to keep the thoughts of eternal damnation out of their minds: and indeed, these two things are so nearly linked together, that the devil cannot well get the soul to go on in sin with delight unless he can keep the thoughts of that terrible after-clap out of their minds.

But let them know, that it shall not always be thus with them; for if when they depart, they drop down into eternal destruction, they shall have such a sense of their sins, and the punishment due to the same, that it shall make them to cry; And he cried. O what an alteration will there be among the ungodly when they go out of this world! it may be a fortnight or a month before their departure, they were light, stout, surly, drinking themselves drunk, slighting God's

people, mocking at goodness, and delighting in sin, following the world, seeking after riches, faring deliciously, keeping company with the bravest, but now they are dropt down into hell, they cry. A little while ago they were painting their faces, feeding their lusts, following their whores, robbing their neighbours, telling of lies, following of plays and sports to pass away the time; but now they are in hell, they do cry. It may be last year they heard some good sermons, was invited to receive heaven, was told their sins should be pardoned if they closed in with Jesus, but refusing his proffers, and slighting the grace that was once tendered, they are now in hell, and do cry.

Before they had so much time (they thought) that they could not tell how to spend it, unless it were in hunting and whoring, in dancing, and playing, and spending whole hours, yea, days, nay, weeks in the lusts of the flesh; but when they depart into another place and begin to lift up their eyes in hell, and consider their miserable and irrecoverable condition, they will cry.

O what a condition wilt thou fall into, when thou dost depart this world; if thou depart unconverted, and not born again, thou hadst better have been smothered the first hour thou wast born; thou hadst better have been plucked one limb from another; thou hadst better have been made a dog, a toad, a serpent, nay, any other creature in the visible world, than to die unconverted; and this thou wilt find to be true, when in hell thou dost lift up thine eyes, and dost cry.

Here then, before we go any further you may see that it is not without good ground, that these words are here spoken by our Lord, that when any of the ungodly do depart into hell, they will cry, cry I why so,

1. They will cry to think that they should be cut off from the land of the living, never more to have any footing therein.

2. They will cry to think that the gospel of Christ should be so often proffered to them, and yet they are not profited by it.

3. They will cry to think that now, tho' they would never so willingly repent and be saved, yet they are past all recovery.

4. They will cry to think that they should be so foolish as to follow their pleasures, when others were following of Christ, Luke 13. 28.

5. They will cry to think that they must be separated from God, Christ, and the kingdom of heaven, and that for ever.

6. To think that their crying will now do them no good.

7. To think, that at the day of judgment they must stand at the left hand of Christ, among an innumerable company of damned ones.

8. They will cry to think, that Lazarus whom once they slighted, must be of them that must sit down with Christ to judge, or together with Christ, to pass a sentence of condemnation on their souls for ever and ever, 1 Cor: 6. 2, 3.

9. Cry to think that when the judgment is over, and others are taken into the everlasting kingdom of glory, then thou must depart back again into that dungeon of darkness from whence thou camest out (to appear before that terrible tribunal) where thou shalt be tormented so long as eternity lasts, without the least intermission or ease.

How sayest thou, O thou wanton, proud, swearing, lying, ungodly wretch! whether this be to be slighted and made a mock at? And again, tell me now, if it be not better to leave sin, and to close in with Christ Jesus, notwithstanding that reproach thou shalt meet with for so doing, than to live a little while in this world in pleasures and feeding thy lusts in neglecting the welfare of thy soul, and refusing to be justified by Jesus; and in a moment, to drop down to hell, and to cry? O! consider, I say, consider betimes, and put not off the tenders of the grace of our Lord

Jesus, lest you lift up your eyes in hell, and cry for anguish of spirit.

And he cried, and said, Father Abraham, have mercy upon me, and send Lazarus, &c.

These words do not only hold forth the lamentable condition of the damned, and their lamentable howling, and crying out under their anguish of spirit, but also they do signify to us (as I said before) their too late repentance; and also that they would very willingly, if they might, be set at liberty from that everlasting misery, that by their sins they have plunged themselves into. I say, these words do hold forth a desire that the damned have, to be delivered from those torments that they now are in; O father Abraham, saith he, have mercy upon me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame. These words, Father Abraham, may have some difficulty in them. It is possible some may think 'em to be meant of Abraham, and those, or him that crieth out here, to be the Jews. Or it may be some may understand it to be God or Jesus Christ his son, which I rather suppose it may be, that is here cried unto, because you find the same cry to him as it were uttered by the ungodly in other places of scripture, as in Luke 13. 25, 26. Then shall they say, Lord, Lord, we have eat and drank in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. Nay more, in thy name have we cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works. This was just at their resurrection. And again, in Matth. 25. 11. They cry again to him, even to Jesus, Lord, Lord, open to us. And he there again gives 'em a repulse, as also in this parable. But however, or whosoever Abraham is, yet these truths may be observed from the words.

1. That the damned, when in an irrecoverable estate will seek for, or desire deliverance from the wrath that they are, or shall be in, for eternity. Surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.

2. That they will pray (if I may so call it) earnestly for deliverance from their miserable estate. These two things are clear from the words. For mark, he not only said, Father Abraham, have mercy upon me; But he cried, and said, Father Abraham have mercy upon me. From whence, take a third observation, and that is, there is a time coming wherein, tho' men shall both cry and pray, yet they are like to have no mercy at the hand of God, for so was this man served, as I shall further shew by and by when I come to it.

Some people are so deluded by the devil, as to think that God is so merciful, as to own and regard any thing for prayer; they think any thing will go for current and good satisfaction, while they are here in this world, thro' ignorance of the true nature of the mercy of God, and the knowledge in what way God is satisfied for sinners. Now, I say, thro' ignorance they think, that if they do but mutter over some form of prayers, tho' they know not what they say, nor what they request, yet God is satisfied, yea, very well satisfied with their doings; when alas! there is nothing less. O friends, I beseech you to look about you, and seek in good earnest for the spirit of Christ so to help you now, to strive and pray, and to enable you to lay hold on Christ, that your souls may be saved, lest the time come that tho' you cry and pray and wish also that you had laid hold on the Lord Jesus, yet you must and shall be damned.

Then again, you may see that tho' God be willing to save sinners at some time, yet this time doth not always last. No, he that can find in his heart to turn his back on Jesus Christ now, shall have the back turned upon him hereafter, when he may cry and pray for mercy, and yet go without it. God will have a time to meet with 'em, that now do not seek after him; they shall have a time, yea, time enough hereafter to repent their folly, and to befool themselves for turning their backs upon the Lord Jesus Christ, I will laugh at their calamities, saith he, and

mock when your fear cometh, Proverbs 1. 26, 27.

Again, this should admonish us, to take time while it is proffered, lest we repent us of our unbelief and rebellion, when we are deprived of it. Ah friends! time is precious, an hour's time to hear a sermon is precious: I have sometimes thought thus with myself, Set the case, the Lord should send two or three of his servants, the ministers of the gospel, to hell among the damned, with this commission; go ye to hell and preach my grace to those that are there: Let your sermon be an hour long, and hold forth the merits of my son's birth, righteousness, death, resurrection, ascension, and intercession, with all my love in him, and proffer it to them, telling them, that now once more, and but once, do I proffer the means of reconciliation to them. They who are now roaring, being past hope, would then leap at the least proffer of mercy. O they that could spend whole days, weeks, nay, years rejecting the son of God, would now be glad of one tender of that mercy. Father, faith he, have mercy on me.

Again, from these words you may observe, that mercy would be welcome, when souls are under judgment: Now this soul is in the fire, now he is under the wrath of God, now he is in hell, there to be tormented; now he is with the devils and damned spirits, now he feels the vengeance of God; now, Oh now have mercy upon me! Here you may see, that mercy is prized by them that are in hell, they would be glad if they could have it. Father have mercy on me; for my poor soul's sake. send me a little mercy.

And send Lazarus, that he may dip the of his finger in water, and cool my tongue.

These words do not only hold forth, that the ungodly have a desire of mercy, but what those mercies are, that those poor creatures would be glad of.

As first, to have the company of a Lazarus granted to them. Father Abraham have mercy upon me, and send Lazarus. Now Lazarus was he that was

beloved of God, and also he that was hated of them. Therefore,

2. Observe, that those saints that the world in their life time could not endure, now they are departed, they would be glad to have society with them. O now send Lazarus ! tho' the time was when I cared not for him, yet now let me have some society with him.

Tho' the world disregard the society of God's children now, yet there is a time coming, in which they would be glad to have the least company with them. Nay, do but observe those of the saints that are now most rejected by them, even from 'em shall they be glad of comfort, if it might be. Send Lazarus ; he that I slighted more than my dogs, he that I could not endure should come into my house, but must lye at my gate, send him: Now Lazarus shall be welcome to me, now I desire some comfort from him ; but he shall go without it.

From whence again observe, that there is a time coming, O ye furly, dogged persecutors of the saints, that they shall slight you as much as ever you slighted 'em. You have given 'em many an hard word, told many a lie of 'em, given 'em many a blow : and now in your greatest need and extremity they shall not pity you. The righteous shall rather rejoyce when he seeth the vengeance of God upon thee, Psalms 58. 10.

Again, send Lazarus. From whence observe, that any of the saints shall then be owned by you to be saints. Now you look upon them to be the scet with Hymeneus and Phyletus, but then you shall see 'em to be the Lazarus's of God, even God's dear children. Tho' now the saints of the Lord will not be owned by you, because they are beggarly, low, poor, contemptible among you ; yet the day is coming that you shall own them, desire their company, and wish for the least courtesy from them.

Send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger

in water, and cool my tongue: For I am tormented in this flame.

Thus shall the souls that abide in their sins, cry out in the bitterness of their spirits, with wonderful anguish and torment of conscience, without intermission: That he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue. That he, namely the man who before I scorned should eat with the dogs of my flock, that before I slighted and no regard of, that I shut out of doors; send him, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue.

Now these words, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, &c. do hold forth the least friendship or favour; as if he should have said, now I would be glad of the least mercy, now I would be glad of the least comfort, tho' it be but one drop of cold water on the tip of his finger. One would have thought that this had been a small request, a small courtesy, one drop of water, what is that? Take a pail full of it, if that will do thee any good. But mark, he is not permitted to have so much as one drop. not so much as a man may hold on the tip of his finger; this signifies, that they that fall short of Christ, shall be tormented even as long as eternity lasteth, and shall not have so much as the least ease, no not so long as while a man may turn himself round, not so much leave as to swallow his spittle, not one drop of cold water.

O that these things did take place in you hearts, how would it make you to seek after rest for your souls before it be too late, before the sun of the gospel be set upon you.

Consider, I say, the misery of the ungodly that they shall be in, and avoid their vices, by closing in with the tenders of mercy, least you partake of the same portion with them, and cry out in bitterness of your souls, One drop of cold water to cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

Indeed, the reason why the poor world do not so earnestly desire for mercy, is partly, because they do

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not so seriously consider the torment that they must certainly fall into, if they die out of Christ. For let me tell you, did but poor souls indeed consider that wrath that doth by right fall to their shares, because of their sins against God, they would make more haste to God thro' Christ, for mercy than they do; then we should have them say, it is good closing with Christ to day, before we fall into such distress.

But why is it said, let him dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue? Because that as the several members in the body have their share in sin, and committing of that, so the several members of the body shall at that time be punished for the same. Therefore when Christ is admonishing his disciples, that they should not turn aside from him, and that they should rather fear and dread the power of their God, than another power; he saith, Fear him therefore, that can cast both body and soul into hell, Luke 12. 4. And again, fear him that can destroy both soul and body in hell. Here is not one member only, but all the body, the whole body of which the hands, feet, eyes, ears, and tongue are members. And I am persuaded, that tho' this may be judged carnal by some now, yet it will appear to be a truth then to the greater misery of those, who shall be forced to undergo that which God in his just judgment shall inflict upon them. O then they will cry, one dram of ease for my cursing, swearing, lying, jeering tongue. Some ease for my bragging, braving, flattering, threatening, dissembling tongue. Now men can let their tongues run at random, as we use to say; now they will be apt to say, Our tongues are our own, who shall controul them? Psal. 12. 4. But then they will be in another mind. Then, O that I might have a little ease for my deceitful tongue! methinks sometimes to consider, how some men do let their tongues run at random, it makes me marvel. Surely they do not think they shall be made to give an account for their offending with their tongue. Did they but think they shall be made to give an account to him

who is ready To judge the quick and the dead; surely they would be more wary of, and have more regard unto their tongue.

The tongue, saith James, is an unruly member, full of deadly poison; it setteth on fire the whole frame of nature, and is set on fire of hell, James 2. The tongue, how much mischief will it stir up in a very little time? How many blows and wounds doth it cause? How many times doth it (as James saith) curse man? How oft is the tongue made the conveyer of that hellish poison that is in the heart, both to the dishonour of God, the hurt of its neighbours, and the utter ruin of its own soul? And do you think the Lord will sit still (as I may say) and let thy tongue run as it lists; and yet never bring you to an account for the same? No say, The Lord will not always keep silence, but will reprove thee, and set thy sins in order before thine eyes. O sinner! Yea, and thy tongue, together with the rest of thy members shall be tormented for sinning. And I say, I am very confident, that tho' this be made light of now, yet the time is coming, when many poor souls will rue the day that ever they did speak with a tongue. O, will one say, that I should so disregard my tongue! O that I, when I said so and so, had before bitten off my tongue! That I had been born without a tongue! my tongue, my tongue, a little water to cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame; even that flame that my tongue, together with the rest of my members, by sinning have brought me to. Poor souls now will let their tongues say any thing for a little profit, for two pence or three pence gain. But O what a grief will this be at that day, when they together with their tongue, must smart for that which they by their tongues have done while they were in this world. Then you that love your souls, look to your tongues, least you bind yourselves down so fast to hell with the sins of your tongues, that you will never be able to get loose again to all eternity. For by thy words thou shalt be condemned, if thou have not

a care of thy tongue. For I say unto you, that for every idle word that man shall speak, he shall give an account thereof in the day of judgment, Matthew 12. 36.

Verse 25. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime hadst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things, but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

THese words are the answer to the request of the damned. The verse before (as I told you) is a discovery of the desires which they have after they depart this world. Here is the answer, Son, remember, &c.

The answer signifies thus much, That instead of having any relief or ease, they are hereby the more tormented; and that by fresh recollections, or by bringing afresh their former ill-spent life, while in the world into their remembrance; Son, remember, thou hadst good things in thy lifetime; as much as if he had said, thou art now sensible what it is to lose thy soul, thou art now sensible what it is to put off repentance; thou art now sensible, that thou hast befooled thyself, in that thou didst spend that time in seeking after outward momentary earthly things, which thou shouldst have spent in seeking to make Christ Jesus sure to thy soul; and now thro' thy anguish of spirit, in the pains of hell, thou would enjoy that which in former time thou didst make slight of, but alas thou art here beguiled and altogether disappointed, thy crying will now avail thee nothing at all, This is not the acceptable time, 2 Cor. 6. 2. This is not a time to answer the desires of damned reprobates, if thou hadst cried out in good earnest while grace was offered. much might have been; but then thou wert careless and didst turn the forbearance and goodness of God into wantonness. Wert thou not told, that those who would not hear the Lord when he did call, should not be heard (if they turned away

from him) when they did call, Prov. 1. 24. to 28. But contrariwise he would laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear did come.

Now therefore, instead of expecting the least drop of mercy and favour, call into thy mind how thou didst spend those days which God did permit thee to live, I say, remember, that in thy lifetime thou didst behave thyself rebelliously against the Lord, in that thou wert careless of his word and ordinances, yea, and of the welfare of thine own soul also: Therefore, now I say, instead of expecting or hoping for any relief, thou must be forced to call to remembrance thy filthy ways, and feed upon them, to thine everlasting astonishment and confusion.

From these words therefore which say, Remember that thou in thy lifetime hadst thy good things, there are these things to be taken notice of.

1. They that by putting off repentance and living in their sins, lose their souls; shall instead of having the least measure of comfort when they come into hell have their ill spent life always very fresh in remembrance. While they live here, they can sin and forget it; but when they depart, they shall have it before them, they shall have a remembrance, or their memory notably enlightned, and a clearer, and continual sight of all their wicked practices that they wrought and did while they were in the world. Son, Remember, saith he; then you will be made to remember: 1. How you were born in sin, and brought up in the same.

2. Remember how thou hadst many a time the gospel preached to thee for taking away the same, by him whom the gospel doth hold forth.

3. Remember that out of love to thy sins and lusts, thou didst turn thy back on the tenders of the same gospel of good tidings and peace.

4. Remember that the reason why thou didst lose thy soul, was, because thou didst not close in with free grace, and the tenders of a loving and free hearted Jesus Christ,

5. Remember, how near thou wast to turning at such and such a time, only thou wast willing to give way to thy lusts when they wrought, to drunkards when they called, to pleasures when they proffered themselves, to the cares and incumberances of the world, which like so many thorns, did choak that or those convictions that were set on thy heart.

6. Remember how willing thou wast to satisfy thy self with an hypocrite's hope, and with a notion of the things of God, without the real power and life of the same.

7. Remember how thou, when thou wert admonished to turn, didst put off turning and repenting till another time.

8. Remember how thou didst dissemble at such a time, lie at such a time, cheat thy neighbour at such a time, mock, flout, scoff, taunt, hate, persecute the people of God at such a time in such a place, among such company.

9. Remember that while others were met together in the fear of the Lord to seek him, thou wast met with a company of vain companions to sin against him; while the saints were a-praying, thou wert a-cursing; while they were speaking good of the name of God, thou wert speaking evil of the saints of God. O then thou shalt have a scalding hot remembrance of all thy sinful thoughts, words and actions, from the very first to the last of them that ever thou didst commit in all thy life-time; then thou wilt find that scripture to be a truth, Deut. 28. 65. 66. 67. The Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind. And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee, and thou shalt fear day and night, and shall have none assurance of thy life. In the morning thou shalt say, would to God it were evening; for the fear of thine heart, wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes, which thou shalt see. Nay, thou wilt find worse things to thy wo than this scripture doth manifest. For indeed there is no tongue able to express the horror, terror, torment and eter-

nal misery that those poor souls shall undergo, without the least mitigation of ease, a very great part of it shall come from that quick, full, and continual remembrance of their sins that they shall have. And therefore there is much weight in these words, Son, remember that thou in thy life time hadst thy good things.

From these words you see, this is to observed, That the ungodly shall remember, or have in remembrance the mis-spending their lives; Remember that in thy life time, thou hadst thy good things. You may take these words, good things, either simply for the things of this world, which in themselves are called, and may be called Good things; or else with these words, namely (the things of this life) all the pleasures, delights, profits, and vanities, which the ignorant people of the world do account their good things, and do very much cheer themselves therewith, Soul, soul, eat, drink, and be merry, for thou hast much goods laid up for many years, Luke 12. 20. Now I say, God according to his glorious power and wisdom, will make poor creatures have always in their minds, a fresh and clear remembrance of their ill-spent life, he will say unto them, Remember, remember, that in thy life time it was thus and thus with thee, and in thy life time thy carriage was so and so.

If sinners might have their choice, they would not have their sins and transgressions so much in the remembrance: as it is evident by their carriages here in this world; for they will not endure to entertain a serious thought of their filthy life, They put far away the evil day, Amos 6. 3. Ezek. 12. 27. but will labour by all means to put the thought of it out of their mind; but there they shall be made to remember to purpose, and to think continually of their ungodly deeds. And therefore it is said, that when our Lord Jesus Christ comes to judgment, it will be to convince the ungodly world of their wicked and ungodly deeds; mark, to convince them, Jude 14. 15.

They will not willingly take notice of them now. But then they shall hereafter, in spite of their teeth. And also between this and then, those that die out of Christ shall be made to see, acknowledge and confess, do what they can, when they lift up their eyes in hell, and remember their transgressions. God will be a swift witness against them, Mal. 3. 5. and will say, Remember what thou didst in thy life time, how thou didst live in thy life time. Ha friend! If thou dost not in these days of light remember the days of darkness, Ecclef. 11. 8. (the days of death, hell, and judgment) thou shalt be made in the days of darkness, death, hell, and at the judgment too, to remember the days of the gospel, and how thou didst disregard them too, to thy own destruction and everlasting misery. This is intimated in that 25th chapter of Matthew.

Remember that in thy lifetime thou hadst thy good things.

The great God, instead of giving the ungodly any ease, will even aggravate their torments; first, by slighting their perplexities, and by telling of them what they must be thinking off: Remember, saith he, O ye lost souls, that you had your joy in your lifetime, your peace in your lifetime, your comforts, delights, ease, wealth, health, your heaven, your happiness, and your portion in your lifetime.

O miserable state! Thou wilt then be in a sad condition indeed, when thou shalt see that thou hast had thy good things, thy best things, thy pleasant things; for that is clearly signified by these words, Remember that thou in thy lifetime hadst thy good things, or all the good things thou art like to have. From whence take notice of another truth (tho' it be a dreadful one) which is this, There are many poor creatures, who have all their good, sweet, and comfortable things in this life, or while they are alive in this world: Remember, saith he, that in thy lifetime thou hadst thy good things, Psal. 17. 14.

The wicked's good things will shortly have an end:

They will last no longer with them than this life, or their lifetime: that scripture was not written in vain: It is like the crackling of thorns under a pot, makes a little blaze for a sudden, little heat for a while: But come and consider them by and by, and instead of a comfortable heat, you will find nothing but a few dead ashes; and instead of a flaming fire, nothing but a smell of smoak.

There is a time coming, that the ungodly would be glad of a better portion, when they shall see the vanity of this, that is; when they shall see what a poor and miserable a thing it is for a man to have his portion in this world. 'Tis true, while they are here on this side hell, they think there is nothing to be compared with riches, honours, and pleasures in this world, which makes them cry out, Who will shew us any good, Psal. 4. 7. That is comparable to the pleasures, profits and glory of this world? but then they will see there is another thing that is better, and of more value than ten thousand worlds. And seriously, friends, will it not grieve you, trouble, perplex and torment you, when you shall see that you lost heaven for a little pleasure and profit in your lifetime; certainly it will grieve you, and perplex you exceedingly, to see what a blessed heaven you left for a dunghil world. Oh! that you did but believe this, that you did but consider this, and say within yourselves, What, shall I be contented with my portion in this world! What, shall I lose heaven for this world? I say consider it while you have day-light, and gospel-light, while the Son of God doth hold out terms of reconciliation to you, lest you be made to hear such a voice as this is, Son, remember that in thy lifetime thou hadst thy good things: Thy comforts, thy joys, thy ease, thy peace, and all the heaven thou art like to have. O poor heaven! O short pleasures? What a pitiful thing it is to be left in such a case? Soul consider, is it not miserable to lose heaven for twenty, thirty, or forty years, sinning against God? When they life is done, thy heaven is also

done ; when death comes to separate thy soul and body, in that day also thou must have thy heaven and happiness separated from thee, and thou from that. Consider these things betimes, lest thou have thy portion in thy lifetime. For if in this life only we have our portion, we are of all people the most miserable, 1 Cor. 15. 19. Again, consider, that when others (the saints) are to receive their good things, then thou hast had thine ; when others are to enter into joy, then thou art to leave and depart from thy joy : when others are to go to God, thou must go to the devil. Oh miserable ! Thou hadst better thou hadst never been born, than to be an heir of such a portion : Therefore, I say, have a care it be not thy condition.

Remember that thou hadst thy good things, and Lazarus evil things.

These words do not only hold forth the misery of the wicked in this life, but also great consolation to the saints ; where he saith, And Lazarus evil things ; that is, Lazarus had his evil things in this lifetime, or when he was in the world.

From whence observe,

1. That the life of the saints, so long as they are in this world, is attended with many evils or afflictions ; which may be discovered to be of divers natures ; as saith the scripture, Many are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.

2. Take notice, that the afflictions or evils that accompany the saints, may continue with them their lifetime, so long as they live in this vale of tears ; yea, and they may be divers, that is of several sorts ; some outward, some inward, and that as long as they shall continue here below, as hath been the experience of all saints in all ages ; and this might be proved at large, but I only hint in these things, and I altogether might enlarge much upon them.

3. The evils that doth accompany the saints will continue no longer with them than their lifetime ; and

here indeed lyes the comfort of believers, the Lazarus's, the saints, they must have all their bitter cups wrung up to them in their lifetime: here must be all their trouble, here must be all their grief. Behold, faith Christ, the world shall rejoyce, but ye shall lament, but your mourning shall, mark, it shall be turned in to joy, John 16. 2. You shall lament, you shall be sorrowful, you shall weep in your lifetime, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. and your joy no man (let him be what he will, no man) shall take away from you. Now if you think, when I say the saints have all their evil things in their lifetime, that I mean, they have nothing else but trouble in this their lifetime, this is your mistake: for let me tell you, that tho' the saints have all their evil things in their lifetime, yet even in their lifetime, they have also Joy unspeakable and full of glory, while they look not at the things that are seen, but at the things which are not seen. The joy that the saints have sometimes in their heart, by a believing consideration of the good things to come, when this life is ended, doth fill them fuller of joy, than all the crosses, temptations, troubles, and evils that accompany them in this life, can fill them with grief, 2 Cor. 4.

But some saints may say, My troubles are such as are ready to overcome me. Ans. Yet be of good comfort, they shall last no longer than thy lifetime.

But my trouble is, I am perplexed with an heart full of corruption and sin, so that I am much hindered in walking with God. Ans. 'Tis like so, but thou shalt have thy troubles no longer than thy lifetime.

But I have a cross husband, and that's a great grief to me.

Well, but thou shalt be troubled with him no longer than thy lifetime, and therefore be not dismayed, be not discomfited, thou shalt have no trouble longer than this lifetime.

Art thou troubled with cross children, cross rela-

tions, cross neighbours? They shall trouble thee no longer than this lifetime.

Art thou troubled with a cunning devil, with unbelief? yea, let it be what it will, thou shalt take thy farewell of them all (if thou be a believer) after thy lifetime is ended. O excellent! Then God shall wipe away all tears from your eyes: There shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor any more pain; for the former things are passed away.

But now on the contrary, if thou be not a right and sound believer: Then tho' thou should live a thousand years in this world, and meet with sore afflictions every day; yet these afflictions, be they never so great and grievous, they are nothing to that torment that will come upon thee, both in soul and body, after this life is ended.

I say, be what thou wilt, if thou be founded in unbelief, or under the first covenant, thou art sure to smart for it at the time when thou dost depart this world. But the thing to be lamented is, for all this is so sad a condition to be fallen into, yet poor souls are for the most part senseless of it; yea, so senseless (at sometimes) as tho' there was no such misery to come hereafter. Because the Lord doth not immediately strike with his sword, but doth bear long with his creature, waiting that he might be gracious: Therefore, I say, the hearts of some of the sons of men are wholly set upon it to do mischief, Eccl. 8. 11. And that forbearance and goodness of God, that one would think should lead them to repentance, the devil hardening of them by their continuing in sin, and by blinding their eyes, as to the end of God's forbearance towards them, they are led away with a very hardened and senseless heart, even until they drop into eternal destruction.

But poor hearts, they must have a time in which they must be made sensible of their former behaviours, when the just judgment of the Lord shall flame about their ears, inasmuch, that they shall be made

to cry out again with anguish, I am sorely tormented in this flame.

But now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

As if he should say, Now hath God recompenced both Lazarus and you, according to what you sought after, while you were in this world: As for your part, you did neglect the precious mercy and goodness of God, you did turn your back on the Son of God, that came into the world to save sinners; you made a mock of preaching the gospel; you was admonished over and over, to close with the loving-kindness of the Lord, in his Son Jesus Christ. The LORD let you live twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty, years; all which time, you instead of spending it to make your calling and election sure, John 21. 29. 30. did spend it in making of eternal damnation sure to thy soul. And also Lazarus, he in his lifetime did make it his business to accept of my grace and salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ. When thou wast in the ale-house, he frequented the word preached; when thou wert jeering at goodness, he was sighing for the sins of the times, Eccles. 9. 4. While thou wert swearing, he was praying: in a word, while thou wert making sure of eternal ruin, he by faith, in the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, was making sure of eternal salvation. Therefore, Now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

Here then you may see, that as the righteous shall not always be void of comfort and blessedness; so neither shall the ungodly go always without their punishment. As sure as God is in heaven, it will be thus: They must have their several portions. And therefore you that are the saints of the Lord, follow on, be not dismayed, Forasmuch as you know, that your labour is not in vain in the Lord, 1 Cor. 15. last verse. Your portion is eternal glory. And you that are so loath now to close in with Jesus Christ, and to leave your sins to follow him; your day is coming, Psal. 37. 13. in which you shall know, that your sweet morsels of sin, that you so easily take down,

Job 20. 12. 13. 14. and it scarce troubles you, you will have a time so to work within you to your eternal ruin, that you will be in a worse condition than if you had ten thousand devils tormenting you; nay, you had better have been plucked limb from limb a thousand times (if it could be) than to be partakers of this torment, and will assuredly, without mercy, lye upon you.

Verse 26. And besides all this, between us and you, there is a great gulf fixed, so that they which would go from hence to you cannot, neither can they come to us, that would come from thence.

THese words are still part of that answer, that the souls in hell shall have for their sobbings, sighings, grievous cries, tears and desires, that they have, to be released out of these intolerable pains they feel and are perplexed with. And O methinks the words at the first view, if rightly considered, are enough to make any hard-hearted sinner in the world to fall down dead. The verse I last spake of was, and is a very terrible one, and aggravates the torments of poor sinners wonderfully. Where he saith, Remember that thou in thy lifetime hadst thy good things, and Lazarus his evil things, &c. I say these words are very terrible to those poor souls that die out of Christ. But these words do much more hold out their sorrow. They were spoken, as to the present condition then upon the sinner: These do not only back the former, but do yet further aggravate their misery, holding forth that which will be more intolerable. The former verse is enough to smite any sinner into a swoon, but this is enough to make them fall down dead; where he saith, And besides all this: There is still something to aggravate thy misery more abundantly. I shall briefly speak to the words, as they have relation to the terror spoken of in the verses before. As if he had said, Thou thinkest the present state unsupportable, it makes thee to sob and sigh, it

makes thee to rue the time that ever thou wert born: Now thou findest the want of mercy; now thou wouldst leap at the least dram of it; now thou feelest what it is to slight the tenders of the grace of God: now it makes thee to sob, sigh, and roar exceedingly, for the anguish that thou art in. But besides all this, I have other things to tell thee of, that will break thine heart indeed. Thou art now deprived of a being in the world; thou art deprived of hearing the gospel, the devil hath been too hard for thee, and hath made thee miss of heaven; thou art now in hell among an innumerable company of devils, and all thy sins beset thee round; thou art all over wrapped in flames, and canst not have one drop of water to give thee any ease; thou cryest in vain for nothing will be granted; thou seest the saints in heaven, which is no small trouble to thy damned soul; thou seest that neither God nor Christ takes any care to ease thee, or speak any comfort unto thee: But besides all this, There thou art, and there thou art like to lie, never think of any ease, never look for any comfort; repentance now will do thee no good, the time is past, and can never be called again; look what thou hast now, thou must have for ever.

'Tis true I spake enough before to break thine heart asunder; But besides all this, there lye and swim in flame for ever: These words, besides all this, are terrible words indeed. I will give you the scope of them in a similitude. Set the case you should take a man, and tye him to a stake, and with red hot pincers, pinch off his flesh, by little pieces for two or three years together, and at last, when the poor man cries out for ease and help, the tormenters answer, Nay, but besides all this, you must be handled worse.

We will serve you thus these twenty years together, and after that we will fill your mangled body full of scalding lead, or run you thro' with a red-hot spit; would not this be lamentable? Yet this is but a flea-biting to the sorrow of those that go to hell; for if a man were served so, there would ere it were long be

an end of him. But he that goes to hell shall suffer ten thousand times worse torments than these, and yet shall never be quite dead under them. There they shall be ever whining, pining, weeping, mourning, ever tormented without ease, and yet never dissolved into nothing; if the biggest devil in hell might pull thee all to pieces and rend thee small as dust, and dissolve thee into nothing, thou wouldst count this a mercy. But here thou must lye and fry, scorch, and broil, and burn for ever: For ever, that is a long while, and yet it must be so long. Depart from me, faith Christ, into everlasting fire; into the fire that burns for ever, prepared for the devil and his angels, Mat. 25. 41. Oh! thou that were loath to foul thy foot if it were but dirty, or did but rain; thou that were loath to come out of the chimney corner, if the wind did but blow a little cold; and were loth to go half a mile, yea, half a furlong to hear the word of God, if it were but a little dark; thou that were loath to leave a few vain companions to edify thy soul; thou shalt have fire enough, thou shalt have night enough, and evil company enough, thy belly full if thou miss of Jesus Christ: and besides all this, thou shalt have them for ever and ever.

O thou that dost spend whole nights in carding and dicing, in rioting and wantonness; thou that countest it a brave thing to swear as fast as the bravest, to spend with the greatest spend-thrift in the country; thou that lovest to sin in a corner when no body sees thee! O thou that for by-ends dost carry on an hypocrite's profession, because thou wouldst be counted some body among the children of God, but art an enemy to the things of Christ in thine heart! thou that dost satisfy thyself, either with sins, or a bare profession of godliness, thy soul will fall into extream torment and anguish, so soon as ever thou dost depart this world, and there thou shalt be weeping and gnashing thy teeth, Matth. 8. 11, 12. And besides all this, thou art like never to have any ease or remedy never look for any deliverance, thou shalt die in thy

sins, and be tormented as long as there are stars in the firmament, or sands on the sea shore; and besides all this, thou must abide it for ever.

And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they come to us that would come from thence. There is a great gulf fixed) You will say, What is that? Answ. It is a nice question; therefore, first seek thou rather to enter in at the straight gate, than curiously to enquire what this gulf is.

But 2dly, If thou wouldst needs know, if thou do fall short of heaven, thou wilt find this, namely, The everlasting decree of God; that is there is a decree gone forth from God, that those who fall short of heaven in this world, God is resolved they shall never enjoy it in the world to come. And thou wilt find this gulf so deep, that thou shalt never be able to wade thro' it as long as eternity lasts, as Christ saith, Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him, lest he hawl thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison: I tell thee thou shalt in no wise come out thence (there is the gulf) the decree; thou shalt not depart thence till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing, or very last mite, Luke 12. 58, 59. These words, therefore, There is a great gulf fixed, I do understand to be the everlasting decree of God: God hath decreed, that those who go to heaven shall never go from thence again into a worse place; and also those that go to hell and would come out they shall not come out thence again. And friend, this is such a gulf, so fixed by him that cannot lie, that thou wilt find it so, which way soever thou goest, whether it be to heaven or hell. Here therefore thou seest how secure God will make those who die in the faith; God will keep them in heaven; but those that die in their sins, God will throw them into hell, and keep them there: so that they that would go from heaven to hell, cannot; neither can they come from hell

that would go to heaven. Mark, he doth not say, they would not: For O, how fain would those who have lost their souls for a lust, for two pence, for a jugg of ale, for a strumpet, for this world come out of that hot scalding fiery furnace of God's eternal vengeance, if they might; but here is their misery, they that would come from you to us, that is from hell to heaven, cannot, they must not, they shall not; they cannot, God hath decreed it, and is resolved the contrary, here therefore lyes the misery, not so much that they are in hell, but there they must lye for ever and ever. Therefore if thy heart would at any time tempt thee to sin against God, cry out, no, for then I must go to hell and lye there for ever. If the drunkards, swearers, liars, and hypocrites did but take this doctrine soundly down, it would make them tremble when they think of sinning. But poor souls, Now they will make a mock at sin, Prov. 14. 9. and play with it as a child doth play with a rattle, but the time is coming, that these rattles that now they play with will make such a noise in their ears and consciences, that they shall find, that tho' all the devils in hell were yelling at their heels, the noise would not be comparable to it, Num 32. 23. Friend, thy sins, as so many blood hounds, will first hunt thee out, and then take thee, and bind thee, and hold thee down for ever, Prov. 5. 22. They will grip thee, and gnaw thee, as if thou hadst a nest of poisonous serpents in thy bowels, John 20. 14. And this will not be for a time, but as I have said, for ever, for ever, for ever.

Verse 27. Then he said, I pray thee therefore father, that thou wouldst send him to my father's house.

THE verses before, I told you, were spoken partly, to hold forth a desire that the damned have to be freed of their endless misery. Now this verse still holds forth the cries of those poor souls very ve-

hement, they would very fain have something granted to them, but it will not be; as will more clearly appear afterwards.

Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, &c. As if he should say, Seeing I have brought myself into such a miserable condition, that God will not regard me, that my exceeding loud and bitter cries will not be heard for myself; seeing I must not be admitted to have so much as one drop of cold water, nor the least help from the poorest saints.

And seeing, besides all this, here my soul must lye to all eternity broiling and frying; seeing I must whether I will or no, undergo the hand of eternal vengeance and the rebukes of devouring fire; seeing my state is such, that I would not wish a dog in my condition, Send him to my father's house. It is worthy to be taken notice of (again) who it is he desired to be sent, namely, Lazarus. O friend, see here how the stout hearts and stomachs of poor creatures will be humbled (as I said before) they will be so brought down, that those things that they disdained and made light of in this world, they would be glad of in the life to come; he who by this man was so slighted as that he thought it a dishonour that he should eat with the dogs of his flock; what shall I regard Lazarus, scrubbed, beggarly Lazarus? What, shall I so far dishonour my fair, sumptuous, and gay house, with such a scabbed creep-hedge as he? No, I scorn he should be entertained under my roof. Thus in his lifetime, while he was in his bravery; but now he is come into another world, now he is parted from his pleasures, now he sees his fine house, his dainty dishes, his rich neighbours and companions and he are parted asunder, now he finds instead of pleasures, torments; instead of joy, heaviness; instead of heaven, hell; instead of the pleasures of sin, the horror and guilt of sin; O now send Lazarus!

Lazarus it may be, might have done him some

good, if he might have been entertained in time past, and might have perswaded him, at least, not to have gone on so grievously wicked, but he slights him, he will not regard him, he is resolved to disown him, tho' he lose his soul for so doing. I, but now send Lazarus, if not to me, to my father's house, and let him tell them from me, that if they run on in sin, as I have done, they must receive the same wages that I have received.

Take notice of this, you that are despisers of the least of the Lazarus's of our Lord Jesus Christ; it may be now you are loath to receive these little ones of his, because they are not gentlemen, because they cannot with Pontius Pilate speak Hebrew, Greek and Latin. Nay, they must not, shall not speak to them to admonish them, and all because of this.

Tho' now the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ may be preached to them freely, and for nothing; nay, they are now desired to hear and receive it. Tho' now they will not own, regard or embrace these Christian proffers of the glorious truth of Jesus, because they came out of some of the basest earthen vessels, 1 Cor. 1. 26. Yet the time is coming when they will both sigh and cry, Send him to my father's house, I say, remember this, ye that despise the day of small things, the time is coming, when you would be glad, if you might enjoy from God, from Christ, or his saints, one small drop of cold water, tho' now you are unwilling to receive the glorious distilling drops of the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

Again, See here the lamentable state they are in, that go to hell from their fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, &c. While they are in this world, men delight to set their children ill examples; and also children love to follow the wicked steps of their ungodly parents; but when they depart this life, and drop down into hell, and find themselves in irrecoverable misery, they cry, Send some body to my father's house, to my brother's house. Tell them my state is miserable, tell them I am undone for ever.

and tell them also, that if they will be walking in these ungodly steps wherein I left them, they will assuredly fall into this place of torments.

I pray thee send him to my father's house.) Ah friends and neighbours, it is like you little think of this, that some of your friends and relations are crying out in hell, Lord, send some body to my father's house, to preach the gospel to them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

Here, men while they live, can willingly walk together in the way of sin, and when they are parted by death, they that are living, seldom or never consider of the sad condition that they that are dead are descended into.

But ye ungodly fathers, how are your ungodly children roaring now in hell? And you ungodly children, how are your ungodly parents that lived and died ungodly, now in the pains of hell also? And one drunkard is singing on the ale-bench, and another roaring under the wrath of God, saying, O that I was with him. how would I rebuke him, and perswade him by all means, to leave off these evil courses. O that they did but consider what I now suffer for pride, covetousness, drunkenness, lying, swearing, stealing, whoring, and the like. Oh! did they but feel the thousandth part thereof, it would make them look about them, and not buy sin at so dear a rate as I have done; even with the loss of my precious soul.

Send him to my father's house.) Not to my father, but to my father's house. It may be there's ungodly children, there's ungodly servants, and all wallowing in their ungodliness; send him therefore to my father's house. It is like they are still the same that I left them; I left them wicked and they are wicked still; I left them slighers of the gospel, saints, and ways of God, and they do it still; Send him to my father's house. It is like there is but little between them and the place where I am; Send him to-day, before to-morrow, lest they come into the same place of torment. I pray thee thou wouldest send him. I beg

it on my bended knee, with crying and with tears, in the agony of my soul. It may be, they will not consider, if thou do not send him: I left them sottish enough, hardened as well as I, they have the same devil to tempt them, the same lusts and world to overcome them, I pray thee therefore, that thou wouldst send him to my father's house: make no delay, lest they lose their souls, lest they come hither, if they do, they are like never to return again. O, little do they think, how easily they may lose their souls, they are apt to think their condition to be as good as the best, as I once through ignorance did: but send him, send him without delay, lest they come into this place of torment. O that thou wouldst give him commission, do thou send him thyself; the time was, when I, together with them, slighted those that were sent of God, though we could not deny but that he spake the word of God, and was sent of him, as our conscience told us: yet we preferred the calls of men before the calls of God; for though they had the one, yet because they had not the other in that antichristian way which we thought meet, we could not, would not, either hear him ourselves, nor yet give consent that others should. But now a call from God is with all. Do (thou) therefore send him to my father's house.

The time was when we did not like it except it might be preached in the synagogue, we thought it a low thing to preach and pray together in houses: we were too high spirited, too superstitious; the gospel would not down with us, unless we had it in such a place, by such a man? no, nor then neither effectually: But now, Oh that I was to live in the world again! and might have that priviledge to have some acquaintance with blessed Lazarus, some familiarity with that holy man; what attendance would I give unto his wholesome words? How would I affect his doctrine and close in with it? how would I square my life thereby? Now (therefore) as it is better to hear the gospel under a hedge, than to sit roaring in a ta-

vern; it is better to welcome God's begging Lazarus's, than the wicked companions of this world. It is better to receive a saint in the name of a saint, a disciple in the name of a disciple, Luke 10. 16. than to do as I have done. Oh! It is better to receive a child of God, that can by experience deliver the things of God, his free love, his tender grace, his rich forbearance, and also the misery of man if without it, than to be daubed up with untempered mortar, Ezek. 13. Oh! I may curse the day that ever I gave way to a company of carnal men, but this my repentance is too late, I should have looked about me sooner, if I would have been saved from this dismal place. Therefore send him, not only to the town I lived in, and unto some of my acquaintance, but to my father's house.

In my lifetime, I did not care to hear that word that cut me most, and shewed my estate aright.

I was vexed to hear my sins mentioned, and laid to my charge; I loved him best that deceived me most, that said, Peace, peace, when there were no such thing, Jer. 5. 30. 31. But now, Oh that I had been soundly told of it! O that it had pierced both mine ears and heart, and had stuck so fast, that nothing could have cured me, saving the blood of Christ! It is better to be dealt plainly with, than that we should be deceived, they had better see their lost condition in the world, than stay while they be damned, as I have done: therefore send Lazarus, send him to my father's house. Let him go and say, I saw your son, your brother, in hell, weeping, and wailing, and gnashing his teeth: Let him bear them down in it, and tell them plainly it is so, and that they shall see their everlasting misery, if they have not a special care. Send him to my father's house.

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Verse 28. For I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come in this place of torment.

THese words are (if I may so say) a reason given by those in hell, why they are restless, and do cry so loud, it is that their companions might be delivered from those intolerable torments, which they must and shall undergo, if they fall short of everlasting life by Jesus Christ. Send him to my father's house, for I have five brethren, &c. Tho' while they live among them in the world, they were not so sensible of their ruin, yet now they are passed out of the world, and do partake of that which before they were warned of, they can, I say, then cry out, now I find that to be true indeed, which was once and again told and declared to me, that it would certainly come to pass.

For I have five brethren.) Here you may see that there may be, and are whole households in a damnable state and condition, as our Lord Jesus doth by this signify. Send him to my father's house, for they are all in one state, I left all my brethren in a pitiful case. People while they live here, cannot endure to hear that they should be all in a miserable condition; but when they are under the wrath of God, they see it, they know it, and are very sure of it: for they themselves when they were in the world, lived as they do, but they fell short of heaven, and therefore if they go on, so shall they. Oh therefore send quickly to my father's house, for all the house is in an undone condition and must be damned, if they continue so.

The thing observable is this, namely, that those that are in hell, do not desire that their companions should come thither, nay, rather, saith he, Send him to my father's house, and let him testify to them that are therein lest they also come into this place of torment.

Quest. But some may say, What should be the reason, that the damned should desire not to have their companions come into the same condition that they are fallen into, but rather that they might be kept from it, and escape that dreadful state.

Ans. I do believe there is scarce so much love in any of the damned in hell, as really to desire the salvation of any. But in that there is any desire in them that are damned, that their friends and relations should not come into that place of torment: it appears to me, to be rather for their own ease, than for their neighbour's good; for let me tell you, this I do believe, that it will aggravate the grief and horror of them, to see their ungodly neighbours in the like destruction with them; for where the ungodly do live and die, and descend into the pit together, the one is rather a vexation to the other, than any thing else. And it must needs be so, because there are no ungodly people that do live ungodly together, but they do learn ill examples one of another, as thus; If there live one in the town that is very expert and cunning for the world, why now the rest that are of the same mind with him, they will labour to imitate and follow his steps; this is commonly seen.

Again, if there be one given to drunkenness, others of the town through his means, run the more into that sin with him, and do accustom themselves the more unto it, because of his enticing them, and also by setting such an ill example before them. And so if there be any addicted to pride, and must needs be in all the newest fashions, how do their example provoke others to love and follow the same vanity? Spending that upon their lusts, which should relieve their own and others wants. Also if there be any given to jesting, scoffing, lying, whoring, back-biting, junketing, wantonness, or any other sin? they that are most expert in these things do oft times intangle others; that peradventure would not have been so vile as now they are, had they not had such an example, and hence they are called corrupters, Isa. 1. 4.

Now these will by their doings, exceedingly aggravate the condemnation of one another. He that did set his neighbour an ill example, and thereby caused him to walk in sin: He will be found one cause of his friends destruction, insomuch, that he will have to answer for his own sin, and for a great part of his neighbours too, which will still add to his destruction; as the scripture in Ezekiel sheweth, where speaking of the watchman that should give the people warning; if he do not, though the man did die in his sins, yet his blood should be required at the watchman's hand, Ezek. 33.

So here let me tell thee, that if thou shouldest be such an one, as by thy conversation and practices shall be a trap and a stumbling block to cause thy neighbour to fall into eternal ruin, though he be damned for his own sin; yet God may, nay he will charge thee, as being guilty of his blood, in that thou didst not content thyself to keep from heaven thyself, but didst also by thy filthy conversation keep away others and cause them to fall with thee. O therefore, will not this aggravate thy torment? Yea, if thou shouldst die and go to hell before thy neighbours and companions besides the guilt of thine own sins, thou wouldst be so loaded with the fear of the damnation of others to be laid to thy charge, that thou wouldst cry out, O send one from the dead to this companion, and that companion, with whom I had society in my lifetime, for I see my cursed carriage will be one cause of his condemnation, if he fall short of glory.

I left him living in foul and heinous offences: But I was one of the first instruments to bring him to them. Oh! I shall be guilty both of my own and his damnation too! O that he might be kept out hence, lest my torment be aggravated by his coming hither.

For where ungodly people do dwell together, they being a snare and stumbling-block one to another by their practice, they must needs be a torment one to another, and an aggravation of each others damnation. O cursed be thy face, saith one, that ever I set

mine eyes on thee : It was long of thee : I may thank thee : It was thee that did entice me, and ensnare me : It was your filthy conversation that was a stumbling-block to me : It was your covetousness, it was your pride, your haunting the ale-house, your gaming and whoring : It was long of you that I fell short of life : If you had set me a good example, as you set me an ill one, it may be I might have done better than now I do : But I learned of you, I followed your steps, I took counsel of you. O that I had never seen your face ! O that thou hadst never been born to do my soul this wrong as you have done ; O saith the other ; And I may as much blame you for do you not remember how at such a time, and at such a time, you drew me out, and drew me away, and asked me if I would go with you, when I was going about other business, about my calling ; but you called me away. You sent for me, you are as much in the fault as I, though I were covetous, you were proud ; and if you learned covetousness of me, I learned pride and drunkenness of you ; though I learned you to cheat, you learned me to whore, to lie, to scoff at goodness. Though I base wretch did stumble you in some things, you, you did as much stumble me into others. I can blame you as you blame me ; and if I have to answer for some of your most filthy actions, you have to answer for some of mine. I would you had not come hither, the very looks of you do wound my soul, by bringing my sins afresh into my mind, the time when, the manner how, the place where, the persons with whom : It was with you, you ! Grief to my soul ! Since I could not shun thy company there, O that I had been without thy company here !

I say therefore, for these that have sinned together, to go to hell together, it will very much perplex and torment them both ; therefore I judge this is one reason, why they that are in hell do desire, that their friends or companions do not come thither into the same place of torment that they are in. And

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therefore, where Christ saith, that these damned souls cry out, Send to our companions that they may be warned and commanded to look to themselves. O send to my five brethren ! It is because they would not have their own torments heightened by their company : and a sense, yea, a continual sense of their sins, which they did cause them to commit, when they were in the world with them. For I do believe that the very looks of those that have been beguiled by their fellows, I say, their very looks will be a torment to them ; for thereby will the remembrance of their own sins be kept (if possible) the fresher on their consciences, which they committed with them ; and also they will wonderfully have the guilt of the others sins upon them ; being instruments in the hands of the devil, to draw them in too. And therefore, lest this come to pass, I pray thee send him to my father's house. For if they might not come hither, peradventure my torment might have some mitigation ; that is, if they might be saved, then their sins will be pardoned, and not so heavily charged on my soul. But if they do fall into the same place where I am, the sins that I have caused them to commit will lye so heavy, not only on their souls, but also on mine, that they'll sink me into eternal misery, deeper and deeper. O therefore send him to my father's house, to my five brethren, and let him testify to them, lest they come into this place of torment.

These words being thus understood ; what a condition doth it shew them to be in then, that now so much delight in being the very ring leaders of their companions into sins of all sorts whatsoever ?

While men live here, if they can be counted the cunningest in cheating, the boldest for lying, the archest for whoring, the subtlest for coveting and getting the world : If they can cunningly defraud, undermine, cross, anger their neighbours, yea, and hinder them from the means of grace, the gospel of Christ, they glory in it, take a pride in't, and think

themselves pretty well at ease, and their minds are somewhat quiet, being beguiled with sin.

But friend, when thou hast lost this life, and dost begin to lift up thine eyes in hell, and see'st what thy sins have brought thee to; and not only to; but that thou by thy filthy sins did cause others (devil-like) to fall into the same condemnation with thee: And that one of the reasons of their damnation was this, that thou didst lead them to the commission of those wicked practices of this world, and the lusts thereof. Then, O that some body would stop them from coming, lest they also come into this place of torment, and be damned as I am! How will it torment me? Balaam could not be contented to be damned himself, but also he must by his wickedness cause others to stumble and fall. The Scribes and Pharisees could not be content to keep out of heaven themselves, but they must labour to keep out others too. Therefore theirs is the greater damnation.

The deceived cannot be content to be deceived himself, but he must labour to deceive others also. The drunkard cannot be content to go to hell for his own sins, but he must labour to cause others fall into the same furnace with him. But look to yourselves, for here will be damnation upon damnation, damned for thy own sins, and damned for thy being partaker with others in their sins; and damned for being guilty of the damnation of others. O how will the drunkards cry, for leading their neighbours into drunkenness? How will the covetous person howl, for setting his neighbour, his friend, his brother, his children and relations, so wicked an example; by which he hath not only wronged his own soul but also the souls of others. The liar, by lying, learned others to lie; the swearer learned others to swear; the whoremonger learned others to whore.

Now all these, with others of the like sort, will be guilty, not only of their own damnation, but also of the damnation of others. I tell you, that some men have so much been the authors of the damnation of

others, that I am ready to think, that the damnation of them will trouble them as much as their own damnation. Some men (it is to be feared) at the day of judgment will be found to be the authors of destroying whole nations. How many souls do you think Balaam with his deceit will have to answer for? How many, Mahomet? How many the Pharisees, that hired the soldiers to say the disciples stole away Jesus! Mat. 28. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. And by that means stumbled their brethren to this day; and was one means of blinding them from believing the things of God and Jesus Christ, and so the cause of the damnation of their brethren to this very day.

How many poor souls hath Bonner to answer for, think you? And several filthy blind priests? How many souls have they been the means of destroying by their ignorance and corrupt doctrine? Preaching, that was no better for their souls, than ratsbane to the body, for filthy lucre's sake. They shall see, that they, many of them, it is to be feared, will have whole cities and towns to answer for. Ah friend, I tell thee, thou that hast taken in hand to preach to the people, it may be thou hast taken in hand thou canst not tell what, will it not grieve thee, to see thy whole parish come bellowing after thee to hell, crying out, This we may thank thee for, this is long of thee, thou didst not teach us the truth; thou didst lead us away with fables, thou wast afraid to tell us of our sins lest we should not put meat fast enough in thy mouth. O cursed wretch that ever thou should beguile us thus, deceive us thus, flatter us thus! We would have gone out to hear the word abroad; but that thou didst reprove us; and also tell us, That that which we see now is the way of God, was heresy, and a deceivable doctrine; and wast not contented (blind guide as thou wert) to fall into the ditch thyself, but hast also led us thither with thee.

I say, look to thyself, lest thou cry out when it is too late, Send Lazarus to my people, my friends, my children, my congregation to whom I preached, and

beguiled through my folly. Send him to the town in which I did preach last, lest I be the cause of their damnation. Send him to my friends from whence I came, lest I be made to answer for their souls and my own too, Ezek. 33. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

O send him therefore, and let him tell them, and testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Consider that ye thus live in the world, while you are in the land of the living, lest you fall into this condition. Set the case that thou shouldst by thy carriage destroy but a soul, but one poor soul, by one of thy carriages or actions, by thy sinful works; consider it now, I say, lest thou be forced to cry, I pray thee therefore that thou wouldst send him to my father's house, for I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

If so then I shall not only say to the blind guides, look you to yourselves and shut out others: No, but this doth reach unto all those that do not only keep souls from heaven by preaching, and the like, but speaks forth the doom of those that shall anyways be instrumental to hinder others from closing it with Jesus Christ. O what red lines will those be against all these rich, ungodly landlords that so keep under their poor tenants, that they dare not go out to hear the word, for fear their rent should be raised, or they turned out of their houses? What sayst thou landlord, will it not cut thy soul, when thou shalt see that thou couldst not be content to miss of heaven thyself, but thou must labour to hinder others also? Will it not give thee an eternal wound in thy heart, both at death and judgment, to be accused of the ruin of thy neighbour's soul, thy servant's soul, thy wife's soul, together with the ruin of thine own? Think on this, you drunken, proud, rich and scornful landlords, think on this you mad-brained blasphemous husbands, that are against the godly and chaste conversation of your wives; also you that hold your servants so hard to it, that you will not spare them

time to hear the word, unless it be where, and when your lusts will let you. If you love your own souls, your tenants souls, your wives souls, your servants souls, your childrens souls: If you would not cry, if you would not howl, if you would not bear the burden of the ruin of others for ever; then I beseech you consider this doleful story, and labour to avoid the soul-killing torment that this poor wretch groaneth under, when he saith, I pray thee therefore that thou wouldst send him to my father's house.

For I have five brethren, that he may testify, mark, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come in this place of torment.

These words have still something more in them than I have yet observed from them; there are one or two things more that I shall briefly touch upon, and therefore, mark, he saith, That he may testify unto them, &c. Mark, I pray you, and take notice of the word I testify. He doth not say, and let him go unto them, or speak with, or tell them such and such things. No, but let him testify, or affirm it constantly, in case any should oppose it. Let him testify to them. It is the same word the scripture useth to set forth the vehemency of Christ his telling of his disciples of him that should betray him. And he testified, saying, One of you shall betray me. And he testified, that is, he spake it so as to dash or overcome any that should have said it shall not be. It is a word that signifies, that in case any should oppose the thing spoken of, yet that the party speaking should still continue constant in his saying. And he commanded them to preach and to testify, that it was he that was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead. To testify, mark, that is to be constant, irresistible, undaunted, in case it should be opposed and objected against. So here, let him testify to them, lest they come into this place of torment.

From whence observe, That it is not an easy matter to persuade them who are in their sins alive in this world, that they must, and shall be damned if they

turn not, and be converted to God. Let him testify to them, let him speak confidently, tho' they frown upon him, or dislike his way of speaking. And how is this truth verified and cleared by the carriages of almost all men now in the world toward them that do preach the gospel; and shew their own miserable state plainly to them, if they close not with it. If a man do but indeed labour to convince sinners of their sins, and lost condition by nature, though they must be damned if they live and die in that condition; Oh how angry are they at it. Look how he judges, say they, hark how he condemns us; he tells us we must be damned if we live and die in this state; we are offended at him, we cannot abide to hear him or any such as he, we will believe none of them all, but go on in the way we are going; Forbear, why shouldest thou be smitten, said the the ungodly king to the prophet, when he told him of his sins, 2 Chr. 25. 15. 16.

I say, tell the drunkard he must be damned if he leaves not his drunkenness; the swearer, liar, cheat-er, thief, covetous, railers, or any other ungodly persons; they must, and shall lye in hell for it, if they die in this condition; they will not believe, nor credit you.

Again, tell others that there are many in hell that have lived and died in their conditions, and so are they like to be, if they convert not to Jesus Christ, and be found in him; or that there are others that are more civil and sober men, who (although we know that their civility will not save them) if we do but tell them plainly of the emptiness and unprofitableness of that, as to the saving of their souls; and that God will not accept of them, nor love them, notwithstanding these things, and that if they intend to be saved, they must be better provided than with such a righteousness as this; they will either sling away, and come to hear no more, or else if they do come they will bring such prejudice with them in their hearts, That the word prea-

ched shall not profit them, it being mixed, not with faith. but with prejudice in them that hear it, Heb. 4. 1, 2. Nay they will, some of them be so full of anger, that they will break out and call, even those that speak the truth, Hereticks; yea, and kill them, Luke. 4. 25, 26, 27, 28, 29. And why so? Because they tell them, that if they live in their sins, that will damn them; yet if they run and live a righteous life, according to the holy, and just, and good law of God, that will not save them. Yea, because we tell them plainly, that unless they leave their sins and unrighteousness too, and close in with a naked Jesus Christ, his blood and merits, and what he hath done, and is now doing for sinners, they cannot be saved; that unless they do eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, they have no life abiding in them; they grapple presently, and are offended (as the Jews were with Christ, for speaking the same thing to them, John 6. 53. 60.) and sling away themselves their souls and all; by quarrelling against the doctrine of the son of God, as indeed they do, though they will not believe they do; and therefore he that is a preacher of the word, had need, not only tell them, but testify to them, again, and again, that their sins, if they continue in them, will damn them and damn them again. And tell them again, their living honestly according to the law, their paying every one their own, their living quietly with their neighbours, their giving to the poor, their notion of the gospel, and saying, they do believe in Christ will do them no good at the general day of judgment. Ha friends! how many of you are there at this very day, that have been told once and again of your lost, undone condition, because you want the right, real, and saving work of God upon your souls? I say hath not this been told you, yea, testified unto you from time to time, that your state is miserable, yet you are never the better, but do still stand where you did; some in an open ungodly life; and some drowned in a self conceited holiness of Christianity? therefore, for God's sake, if your love

your souls, consider, and beg of God for Jesus Christ's sake, that he would work such a work of grace in your hearts, and give you such a faith in his son Jesus Christ, that you may not only have rest here, as you think, not only think your state safe while you live here, as you may be safe indeed, not only here, but also when you are gone, lest you do cry in the anguish and perplexity of your souls; send one to my companions that have been beguiled by satan, as I have been; and so by going on, come into this place of torment as I have done.

Again, one thing more is to be observed from these words, Let him testify unto them, lest they come into this place of torment.

Mark, lest they come in, as if he had said, or else they will come into this place of torment, as sure as I am here. From whence observe, That though some souls for sin do fall into the bottomless pit of hell before their fellows, because they depart this world before them; yet the other abiding in the same course, are as sure to go to the same place as if they were there already. How so? Because they are all condemned together, they have fallen under the same law, and have all offended the same justice, and must for certain, if they die in that condition, drink as deep if not deeper, of the same destruction. Mark, I pray you what the scriptures say, He that believeth not is condemned already, John 3. 18.

He is condemned as well as they, having broken the same law with them, if so then what hinders, but they will partake of the same destruction with them: Only the one hath not the law so executed upon them, because they are here; the other have had the law executed upon them, they are gone to drink that which they have been brewing, and thou art brewing that in this life, which thou must certainly drink. The same law, I say, is in force against you both, only he is executed, and thou art not. Just as if there were a company of prisoners at the bar, and all condemned to die; what because they are not

all executed in one day, therefore shall they not be executed at all? Yes, the same law that executed its severity upon the parties now deceased, will for certain be executed upon them that are alive in its appointed time. Even so it is here, we are all condemned by nature, if we close not in with the grace of God by Jesus Christ, we must and shall be destroyed with the same destruction; and therefore send him (saith he) lest, mark, they come into this place of torment.

Again, Send him to my father's house, let him testify to them, lest they come into this place of torment. As if he had said, It may be he may prevail with them; it may be he may win upon them, and so they may be kept from hence, from coming into this grievous place of torment. Observe again, That there is a possibility of obtaining mercy, if now, I say, now in this day of grace we turn from our sins to Jesus Christ; yea, it is more than possible. And therefore for thy encouragement, do thou know for certain, that if thou shalt in this thy day accept of mercy upon God's own terms, and close with him effectually, God hath promised, yea, made many promises, that thy soul shall be conducted safe to glory, and shall for certain escape all the evils that I have told thee of; Ay, and many more than I can imagine. Do but search the scriptures, and see how full of consolation they are to a poor soul that is minded to close in with Jesus Christ. He that cometh to me (saith Christ) I will in noways cast out. Though he be an old sinner, I will in noways cast him out; mark, in noways, though he be a great sinner, I will in noways cast him out, if he come to me. Though he have slighted me never so many times, and not regarded the welfare of his own soul, yet let him now come to me, and notwithstanding this, I will in noways cast him out, nor throw away his soul, John 6. 37. Again, saith the apostle, now (mark now) is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation. Now here is mercy good store, now God's heart is open to sinners; now he will make you welcome; now he

will receive any body, if they do but come to Christ, He that comes to me (saith Christ) I will in noways cast out. And why? Because now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation, 2 Cor. 2, 3. as if the apostle had said, If you will have mercy; have it now, receive it now, close in with it now.

God hath a certain day to hold out his grace to sinners: Now is the time, now is the day. 'Tis true there is a day of damnation, but this is a day of salvation. There is a day coming, wherein sinners must cry to the mountains to fall on them, to the hills to cover them from the wrath of God; but now, now is the day in which he doth hold out his grace. There is a day coming, in which you will not be admitted to have the priviledge of one drop of water to cool your tongue. If now I say, if now, you slight his grace and goodness which he holds out to you. Ah friends, consider there is now hopes of mercy, but then there will not; now Christ holds forth mercy unto you, but then he will not, Mat. 7. 23. Now there are his servants that do beseech you to accept of his grace, but if thou lose the opportunity that is put into thine hand, thou thyself mayest beseech hereafter, and no mercy be given thee. And he cried, and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue. And there was none given. Therefore let it never be said of thee, as it will be said of some, Why is there a price put into the hand of a fool, seeing he hath no heart to it: seeing he hath no heart to make a good use of it? Prov. 17. 16. consider therefore with thyself, and say, It is better to be going to heaven than hell; It is better to be saved than damned; It is better to be with saints than with damned souls; and to go to God is better than to go to the devil.

Therefore seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near, Isa. 55. 6. lest in thy trouble he leave thee to thyself, and say unto thee plainly, Where I am thither you cannot come, John 8. 12.

O if they that are in hell might but now again have one such invitation as this, how would they leap for joy? I have thought sometimes, should God send but one of his ministers to the damned in hell, and give him commission to preach the free love of God in Christ extended to them, and held out to them, if now while it is proffered them they will accept of his kindness: Oh how welcome would they make this news, and close in with it on any terms.

Certainly, they would say, we will accept of grace on any terms in the world, and thank you too, tho' it cost life and limb to boot; we will spare no cost or charge, if mercy may be had. But poor souls, while they live here they will not part from sin, with hell bred devilish sin: No they will rather lose their souls, than lose their filthy sins.

But friend, thou wilt change thy note before it be long, and cry, O simple wretch that I am that I should damn my soul by sin!

'Tis true, I have had the gospel preached to me, and have been invited in: I have been preached to and have been warned of this; but how have I hated instruction, and mine heart despised reproof? I have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me, Proverbs 5. 10. 11. Oh therefore, I say, poor soul! is there hope? then lay thine hand upon thy mouth, and kiss the dust, and close in with the Lord Jesus Christ, and make much of his glorious mercy; and invite also thy companions to close in with the same Lord Jesus Christ, lest one of you go to hell before hand, and expect with grief of heart your companions to come after; and in the mean time, with anguish of heart do sigh and say,

O send him to my companions and let him testify to them, lest they also come into this place of torment!

Now then from what hath been said, there might many things be spoken by way of use and application; but I shall be very brief, and but touch some things and so wind up.

And first, I shall begin with the sad condition of those that die out of Christ, and speak something to that.

Secondly, To the latter end of the parable, which more evidently concerns the scripture, and speak somewhat to that.

1. Therefore you see, that the first part of the parable contains a sad declaration of the state of one living and dying out of Christ; how that they lose heaven for hell, God for the devil, light for darkness, joy for sorrow.

2. How that they have not so much as the least comfort from God, who in the time they live here below, neglect coming to him for mercy; not so much as one drop of cold water.

3. That such souls will repent of their folly, when repentance will do them no good, or when they shall be past recovery.

4. That all the comfort such souls are like to have they have it in this world.

5. That all their groanings and sighs will not move God to mitigate in the least, his heavy hand of vengeance that is upon them, for the transgressions they have committed against him.

6. That their sad state is irrecoverable, or they must never (mark) never come out of that condition.

7. Their desires will not be heard for their ungodly neighbours.

From these things then I pray you consider the state of those that die out of Jesus Christ, yea, I say, consider their miserable state, and think thus with thyself. Well, if I neglect coming to Christ, I must go to the devil, and he will not neglect to fetch me away into those intolerable torments.

Think thus with thyself, What shall I lose a long heaven for short pleasure? Shall I buy the pleasures of this world at so dear a rate, as to lose my soul for obtaining of that? Shall I content myself with a heaven that will last no longer than my lifetime? What advantage will these be to me, when [the Lord shall

separate soul and body asunder, and send one to the grave, and the other to hell, and at the judgment-day the final sentence of eternal ruin must be past upon me?

1. Consider, that the profits, pleasures, and vanities of this world will not last for ever, but the time is coming, yea, just at the doors when they will give thee the slip, and leave thee in the suds, and in the brambles of all that thou hast done.

2. And therefore to prevent this thy dismal state, think thus with thyself. 'Tis true, I do love my sins, my lusts and pleasures; but what good will they do me at the day of death and of judgment? Will my sins do me good then? Will they be able to help me when I come to fetch my last breath? What good will my profits do me? And what good will my vanities do when death says he will have no nay? What good will all my companions, fellow-jesters, jeerers, liars, drunkards, and all my wantons do me? Will they help to ease the pains of hell? Will these help to turn the hand of God from inflicting his fierce anger upon me? Nay, will they not rather cause God to shew me no mercy, to give me no comfort; but rather to thrust me down into the hottest place of hell, where I may swim in fire and brimstone.

3. Consider thus with thyself would I be glad to have all, every one of my sins to come in against me, to inflame the justice of God against me? Would I be glad to be bound up in them, as the three children were bound in their cloaths, and to be as really cast into the fiery furnace of the wrath of almighty God, as they were into Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace.

4. Consider thus; would I be glad to have all, and every one of the ten commandments, to discharge themselves against my soul? The first saying, Damn him, for he hath broken me. The second, saying, Damn him, for he hath broken me, &c.

Consider how terrible this will be, yea more terrible, then if thou shouldst have ten of the biggest pieces of ordnance in England to be discharged a-

gainst thy body, thunder. thunder, one after another! Nay, this would not be comparable to the reports that the law (for the breach thereof) will give against thy soul? For those can but kill the body; but these will kill both body and soul; and that not for an hour, a day, a month, or a year, but they will condemn thee for ever.

Mark, it is for ever, for ever. It is into everlasting damnation, eternal destruction, eternal wrath and displeasure from God, eternal gnawings of conscience, eternal continuance with devils.

O consider, it may be the thought of seeing the devil, doth now make thine hair to stand right upon thy head. O but this, to be damned, to be among all the devils, and that not only for a time, as I said before, but for ever, to all eternity.

This is wonderfully miserable, ever miserable, that no tongue of man, nor of angels, is able to express it.

5. Consider much with thyself, not only my sins against the law will be laid to my charge, but also the sins I have committed in slighting the gospel, the glorious gospel: These also must come with a voice against me. As thus, nay, he is worthy to be damned, for he rejected the gospel, he slighted the free grace of God, tendered in the gospel. How many times was thou (damned wretch) invited, intreated, beseeched to come to Christ, to accept of mercy, that thou mightest have heaven, thy sins sins pardoned, thy soul saved, thy body and soul glorified, and all this for nothing but the acceptance, and thro' faith, forsaking those imps of satan, which by their embraces have drawn thee downward toward the gulf of God's eternal displeasure.

How often didst thou read the promises, yea, the free promises of the common salvation? How oft did thou read the sweet counsels and admonitions of the gospel, to accept the grace of God? But thou wouldst not, thou regardest it not, thou didst slight all.

2. As I would have thee to consider the sad and woful state of those that die out of Christ, and are

past all recovery, so would I have thee consider the many mercies and priviledges thou enjoyest above some (peradventure) of thy companions that are departed to their proper place.

As first, Consider, thou hast still the threed of thy life lengthned, which for thy sins might seven years ago, or more, have been cut asunder, and thou have dropped down amongst the flames.

2. Consider the terms of reconciliation by faith in Christ, is still proffered unto thee, and thou invited, yea, intreated to accept of it.

3. Consider, the terms of reconciliation are but (bear with me, tho' I say but) only to believe in Jesus Christ, with that faith that purifies the heart, and enables thy soul to feed on him effectually, and be saved from this sail state.

4. Consider, the time of thy departure is at hand, and the time is uncertain, and also that for ought thou knowest, the day of grace may be past to thee before thou diest, not lasting so long as the uncertain life of this world. And if so, then know for certain, that thou art as sure to be damned, as if thou wert in hell already, if thou convert not in the mean while.

5. Consider, it may be some of thy friends are giving all diligence to make their calling and election sure, being resolved for heaven, and thou thy self endeavourest as fast to make sure of hell, as if resolved to have it; and together with this, consider how it will grieve thee, that while thou wert making sure of hell, thy friends were making sure of heaven, but more of this by and by.

6. Consider, what a sad reflection this will have on thy soul, to see thy friends in heaven, and thy self in hell; thy father in heaven, and thou in hell; thy mother in heaven, and thou in hell; thy brother, thy sister, thy children in heaven, and thou in hell. As Christ said to the Jews of their relations according to the flesh, so may I say to thee concerning thy friends; there shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of

teeth, when you shall see your fathers and mothers, brethren and sisters, husbands, and wives, children and kinsfolk, with your friends and neighbours in the kingdom of heaven, and thou thy self thrust out, Luke 13. 27, 28, 29.

But again, because I would not only tell thee of the damnable state of those that die out of Christ but also perswade thee to take hold of life, and go to heaven, take notice of these following things.

1. Consider, that whatever thou canst do, as to thy acceptance with God, is not worth the dirt of thy shoes, but is all as menstrous rags, Isa. 64. 6.

2. Consider, That all the conditions of the new covenant (as to salvation) are and have been compleatly fulfilled by the Lord Jesus Christ, and that for sinners.

3. Consider that the Lord calls to thee, for to receive whatsoever Christ hath done, and that on free cost, Rev. 22. 17.

4. Consider, that thou canst not honour God more, than to close in with his proffers of grace, mercy, and pardon of sin, Rom. 4.

Again, that which will add to all the rest, thou shalt have the very mercy of God, the blood of Christ, the preachers of the word together with every sermon: all the promises, invitations, exhortations, and all the counsels and threatnings of the blessed word of God; thou shalt have all thy thoughts, words and actions, together with all thy food, thy rayment, thy sleep, thy goods, and also all hours, days, weeks, months and years, together with whatsoever else God hath given thee; I say, thy abuse of all these shall come up in judgment against thy soul. For God will reckon with thee, for every thing, whether it be good or bad; Eccl. 12. 14.

5. Nay further, it is so unreasonable a thing for a sinner to refuse the gospel, that the very devils themselves will come in against thee as well as Sodom, that damned crew: may not they, I say, come in against thee, and say, O thou simple man! O vile wretch! that had

not so much care of thy soul, thy precious soul, as the beast hath of his young, or the dog of the very bone that lyeth before him. Was thy soul worth so much, and didst thou so little regard it; were the thunder claps of the law so terrible, and didst thou so slight them! besides was the gospel so freely, so frequently, so fully tendered to thee, and yet hast thou rejected all these things?

Hast thou valued sin at a higher rate than thy soul? than God, Christ, angels, saints and communion with them in eternal blessedness and glory? wast thou not told of hell fire, those intollerable flames? didst thou never hear of those intollerable roarings of the damned ones that are therein? didst thou never hear or read that doleful saying in the 16th of Luke, how the sinful man cries out among the flames. One drop of water to cool my tongue? thus I say may the very devils, being ready to go with thee into the burning furnace of fire and brimstone, tho' not for sins of so high a nature as thine, trembling say, O that Christ had died for devils, as he died for man! and, Oh that the gospel had been preached to us, as it hath been to thee! how would we have laboured to have closed in with it? but wo be to us, for we might never have it proffered, no, not in the least, tho' we would have been glad of it. But you, you have had it proffered, preached and proclaimed unto you, Prov. 8. 4. Besides, you have been intreated and beseeched to accept of it, but you would not. O simple fools! that might have escaped wrath, vengeance, hell fire, and that to all eternity, and had no heart at all to do it.

6. May not the messengers of Jesus Christ also come in with a shrill and terrible note against thy soul, when thou standest at the bar of God's justice, saying, nay, thou ungodly one, how often hast thou been forewarned of this day? did we not sound an alarum in thine ears, by the trumpet of God's word day after day? how often didst thou hear us tell thee of these things? did we not tell thee sin would damn thy soul? did we not

tell thee, that without conversion, there was no salvation ? did we not tell thee, that they who loved their sins, should be damned at this dark and gloomy day (as thou art like to be ?) yet did we not tell thee, that God out of his love to sinners, sent Christ to die for them, that they might (by coming to him) be saved ? did we not tell thee of these things ? did we not run, ride, labour and strive abundantly (if it might have been) for the good of thy soul (tho' now a damned soul) did we not venture our goods, our names, our lives ? yea, did we not even kill our selves with our earnest intreatings of thee to consider of thine estate, and by Christ to escape this dreadful day ? O sad doom ! when thou shalt be forced, full sore against thy will, to fall under the truth of this judgment, saying, O how have I hated instruction, and how hath my heart despised reproof ! (for indeed) I have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me, Pro. 4 11, 12, 13.

7. May not thy father, thy mother, thy brother, thy sister, thy friend, &c. appear with gladness against thee at the terrible day ? saying Oh thou silly wretch ! how rightly hath God met with thee ? O how righteously doth his sentence pass upon thee ? remember, thou wouldst not be ruled, nor perswaded in thy life time ; as thou didst not care for us and our admonitions then, so neither do we care for thy ruin. Terror and damnation now. No, but we will stand on God's side in sentencing of thee to that portion which the devils must be partakers of. The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance, he shall wash his foot in the blood of the wicked, Psal. 5. 8. 10. O sad ! it is enough to make mountains tremble, and the rocks rend in pieces, to hear this doleful sound. Consider these things, and if thou wouldst be loath to be in this condition, then have a care of living in sin now. How loath wilt thou be to be thrust away from the gates of heaven ? and how loath wilt thou be to be deprived of the mercy of God ?

How unwillingly wilt thou set foot forward toward

the lake of fire : never did malefactor so unwillingly turn off the ladder, when the halter was about his neck, as thou wilt turn from God to the devil, from heaven to hell, when the sentence is passed upon thy soul.

Oh ! how wilt thou sigh and groan ? how willingly wouldst thou hide thy self, and run away from justice ? but alas ! as it is with them that are on the ladder ready to be executed, so it will be with thee. They would fain run away, but there are many halbard men to stay them : and so the angels of God will beset thee round, I say, round on every side ; so that thou mayest indeed look, but run thou canst not : thou mayest wish thy self under some great rock or mountain, Rev. 6. 15, 16. But how to get under thou knowest not.

Oh how unwilling wilt thou be to let thy father go to heaven without thee, thy mother or friends, &c. go to heaven without thee ? how willingly wouldst thou hang on them, and not let them go ? O father, cannot you help me ? mother, cannot you do me some good ? Oh how loath am I to burn and fry in hell, while you are singing in heaven ! but alas, the father, mother, or friends reject them, slight them, and turn their backs upon them, saying, you would have none of heaven in your life-time, therefore you shall have none of it now : you slighted our counsels then ; and we slight your tears, cries, and condition now. What sayst, thou, sinner ? will not this persuade thine heart, nor make thee bethink thy self ? this is now before thou fall into that dreadful place, that fiery furnace. But O consider how dreadful the place it self, the devils themselves, the fire it self will be ! and think at the end of all, here, thou must lye for ever, here thou must fry for ever, and for ever. This will be more to thee than any man with tongue can express or with pen can write. There is none that can, I say, by the ten thousandth part, discover the state and condition of such a soul.

I shall conclude this then with a few considerations of encouragement.

1. Consider (for I would fain have thee come in, sinner) that there is way made by Jesus Christ for them that are under the curse of God, to come to this comfortable and blessed state of Lazarus, I was speaking of. See Eph. 2.

2. Consider, what pains Christ Jesus took for ransoming of thy soul from all the curses, thunder claps, and tempests of the law; from all the intollerable flames of hell; from that soul-sinking appearance of thy person (on the left hand) before the judgment seat of Christ Jesus, from everlasting fellowship, with innumerable companies of yelling, and soul amazing devils, I say, consider what pains the Lord Jesus Christ took in bringing in redemption for sinners, from these things.

1. In that, though he was rich, yet he became poor, that thou, through his poverty, might be made rich; 2. Cor. 8. 9. he laid aside his glory, John 17. and became a servant, Phil. 2. he left the company of angels, and encountred with the devil, Luke 4. Mat. 4. he left heaven's ease for a time, to lye upon hard mountains, John. 8. in a word he became poorer than they that go with flail and rake; yea, than the very birds, or foxes, and all to do thee good. Besides, consider a little of those unspeakable and intollerable slighings and rejections, and the manifold abuses that came from man upon him. How he was falsely accused, being a sweet, harmless, and undefiled Lamb. How he was undervalued, so that a murderer was counted less worth of condemnation than he. Besides, how they mocked him, spit on him, beat him over the head with staves, had the hair pluck'd from his cheeks. I gave my back to smiters, (saith he) and my cheeks to them that pluck'd off the hair, I hid not my face from shame and spitting. His head crowned with thorns, his hands pierced with nails, and his side with a spear; together with how they used him, scourged him, and so miserably misusing him, that they had even spent him

in a great measure before they did crucify him. In-
somuch, that there was another pain to carry his
cross.

Again, not only this, but lay to heart a little what
he received from God his dear father, though he
were his dear and tender son. First, in that he did
reckon him the greatest sinner and rebel in the world ;
for he laid the sins of thousands, and ten thousands,
and thousands of thousands, of sinners to his charge,
Isa. 53. and caused him to drink the terrible cup that
was due to them all ; and not only so, but did delight
in so doing : for it pleased the Lord to bruise him.
God delt indeed with his son, as Abraham would have
dealt with Isaac, Ay, and more terribly by ten thou-
sand parts : For he did not only tear his body like a
lyon, but made his soul an offering for sin. And this
was not done feignedly, but really (for Justice called
for it) he standing in the room of sinners ? witness that
horrible and unspeakable agony that fell on him sud-
denly in the garden, as if all the vials of Gods un-
speakable scalding vengeance had been cast upon him
all at once and all the devils in hell had been broken
loose from thence at once to destroy him, and that for
ever ? insomuch that the very pangs of death seized
upon him in the same hour. For, saith he, my soul is
exceeding sorrowful and amazed, even unto death,
Mark. 14. 33, 34.

Witness also that strange kind of sweat that trickled
down his most blessed face where it is said ; and he
sweat, as it were great drops, or clodders of blood,
trickling down to the ground. O Lord Jesus ! What
a load didst thou carry ! What a burthen didst thou
bear of the sins of the world, and the wrath of God !
O thou didst not only bleed at nose and mouth, with
the pressure that lay upon thee, but thou wast so pres-
sed, so loaden, that the pure blood gushed through the
flesh and skin, and so ran trickling down to the ground.
And his sweat was as it were great drops of blood,
trickling or falling down to the ground, Luke. 22. 44.
canst thou read this, O thou wicked sinner, and yet

go on in sin? canst thou think of this, and defer repentance one hour longer? O heart of flint! yea harder, O miserable wretch! what place in hell will be hot enough for thee to have thy soul put into, if thou shalt persist or go on still to add iniquity to iniquity.

Besides, his soul went down to hell, Psal. 16. 10. Act. 2. 31. and his body to the bars of the grave. And had hell, death or the grave been strong enough to hold him, then he had suffered the vengeance of eternal fire to all eternity. But, O blessed Jesus! how didst thou discover thy love to man of thy thus suffering? and, O God the father! how didst thou also declare thy purity, and exactness of thy justice, in that, tho' it was thine only, holy, innocent, harmless, and undefiled son Jesus, that did take on him our nature, and represent our persons, answering for our sins, instead of our selves: thou didst so wonderfully pour out thy wrath upon him, to the making of him cry out, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? and, O Lord Jesus! What a glorious conquest hast thou made over the enemies of our souls, even wrath, sin, death, hell and devils, in that thou didst wring thy self from under the power of them all? and not only so, but hast led them captive which would have led us captive; and also hast received for us that glorious and unspeakable inheritance, that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive. And also hast given them some discovery thereof through thy spirit.

And now sinner, together with this consider,

Fourthly, that though Jesus Christ hath done all these things for sinners, yet the devils make it their whole work, and continual study, how they may keep thee and others from enjoying of these blessed privileges, that have been thus obtained for sinners, by this sweet Jesus. He labours, I say,

First, To keep thee ignorant of thy state by nature.

Secondly, To harden thy heart against the ways of God.

Thirdly, To inflame thy heart with love to sin, and the ways of darkness.

And, Fourthly, To get thee to continue therein. For that is the way, he knows, to get thee to be a partaker with him of flaming hell fire, even the same that he himself is fallen into; together with the rest of the wicked world, by reason of sin: look to it therefore.

But now, in the next place, a word of encouragement to you that are the saints of the Lord.

1. Consider what an happy state thou art in, that hast gotten the faith of the Lord Jesus into thy soul: (But be sure thou have it) I say, how safe, how sure, how happy art thou. For when others go to hell, thou must go to heaven; when others go to the devil, thou must go to God; when as others go to prison, thou must be set at liberty, at ease, and at freedom; when others must roar for sorrow of heart, then thou shalt also sing for the joy of heart.

Secondly, Consider thou must have all thy well-spent life to follow thee, instead of all thy sins, and the glorious blessings of the gospel, instead of the dreadful curses and condemnations of the law; the blessing of the father, instead of a fiery sentence from the judge.

Thirdly, Let dissolution come when it will, it can do thee no harm; for it will be but only a passage out of a prison into a palace, out of a sea of troubles, into an heaven of rest; out of a croud of enemies, to an innumerable company of true, loving and faithful friends; out of shame, reproach, and contempt, into exceeding great and eternal glory. For death shall not hurt thee with his sting, nor bite thee with his soul-murdering teeth, but shall be a welcome guest to thee, even to thy soul, in that it is sent to free thee from thy troubles which thou art in whilest here in this world, dwelling in the tabernacle of clay.

Fourthly, Consider however it goes with friends and relations, yet it will go well with thee, Eccl. 8.

However it goes with the wicked, yet I know ; Mark, yet I know, (saith he) that it shall go well with them that fear the Lord, that fear before him.

And therefore let this in the first place cause thee chearfully to exercise thy patience under all the calamities, crosses, troubles and afflictions that may come upon thee ; and by patient continuance in well doing, to commit both thy self and thine affairs and actions into the hands of God, through Jesus Christ, as to a faithful creator, who is true in his word, and loveth to give unto thee whatsoever he hath promised to thee.

And therefore to encourage thee, while thou art here with comfort, to hold on for all thy crosses in this thy journey, be much in considering the place that thou must go into, so soon as dissolution comes.

It must be into heaven, to God the judge of all, to an innumerable company of angels, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to the general assembly and church of the first born, whose names are written in heaven, and to Jesus (the redeemer) who is the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaks better things for thee than Abel's did for Cain. Heb. 11. 22, 23, 24.

3. Consider, that when the time of the dead, that they shall be raised is come, then shall thy body be raised out of the grave, and be glorified ; and be made like to Jesus Christ, Phil. 3. 21. O excellent condition !

4. When Jesus Christ shall sit on the throne of his glory, you shall also sit with him, even when he shall sit on the throne of his glory. O will not this be glorious, that when thousands, and thousands of thousands shall be arraigned before the judgment seat of Christ, then for them to sit with him upon the throne, together with him to pass the sentence upon the ungodly, 1. Cor. 6. 2. 3. will it not be glorious to enjoy those things that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man to conceive ?

Will it not be glorious to have this sentence, come

ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world ? will it not be glorious to enter then with the angels and saints into that glorious kingdom ? will it not be glorious for thee to be in glory with them while others are in unutterable torments ? O then ! how will it comfort thee to see thou hast not lost that glory ; to think that the devil hath not got thy soul, that thy soul should be saved, and that not from a little, but a great exceeding danger ; not with a little, but a great salvation. O therefore let the saints be joyful in glory, let them triumph over all their enemies. Let them begin to sing heaven upon earth, triumph before they come to glory, salvation, even when they are in the midst of their enemies, For this honour shall all his saints have, Psal. 149. 6, 7, 8, 9.

Verse 29. Abraham said unto him, they have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.

IN the verses foregoing, you see there is a discovery of the lamentable state of the poor soul that dies out of Christ, and the special favour of God. And also, how little the glorious God of heaven doth regard, and take notice of their most miserable condition.

Now in this Verse, he doth magnify the word which was spoken to the people by the prophets and apostles, They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them. As if he should say, thou askest me, that I should send Lazarus back again into the world, to preach to them that live there. that they might escape that doleful place that thou art in : what needs that ? have they not Moses and the prophets ? have they not had my ministers and servants sent unto them, and coming as from me ; I sent Enoch and Noah, Moses and Samuel ; I sent David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, and the rest of the prophets, together with Peter, Paul, John, Matthew, James, Jude, with the rest, Let them hear them. What they have spoken by divine inspiration, I will own, whether it be for the damnation of these that reject, or the saving of them that receive their doctrine. And therefore what

need have they that one should be sent unto them in another way : they have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them ; let them receive their words, close in with the doctrine declared by them. I shall not at this time speak any thing to that word (Abraham) having touched upon it already ; but shall tell you what is to be understood by these words. They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them. The things that I shall observe from hence, are these. 1. That the scriptures spoken by the holy men of God, are a sufficient rule to instruct to salvation, them that do assuredly believe and close in with what they hold forth. They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them. That is, if they would escape that doleful place, and be saved indeed from the intollerable pains of hell-fire, as they desire, they have that which is sufficient to counsel them. They have Moses and the prophets, let them be instructed by them, let them hear them, 2. Tim. 3. 16, 17. for all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness ; why, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to every good work.

Do but mark these words, all scripture is profitable : all, take it where you will, and in what place you will : all is profitable, for what ? that the man of God, or he that is bound for heaven, and would instruct others in their progress thither.

It is profitable to instruct him, (in case he be ignorant) to reprove him, in case he transgress, to correct him, if he hath need of it ; to confirm him, if he be wavering. It is profitable for doctrine, and all this in a very righteous way, that the poor soul may not only be helped, but thoroughly furnished, not only to some, but to all good works. And when Paul, would counsel Timothy, to stick close to the things that are sound and sure, presently he puts him upon the scriptures, saying, thou hast from a child known the scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. The

Scripture holds forth God's mind and will of his love and mercy towards man, and also the creatures carriage towards him from first to last ; so if thou wouldst know the love of God in Christ to sinners, then search the scriptures, for they are they that testify of him.

Wouldst thou know what thou art, and what is in thy heart ? then search the scriptures, and see what's written in them, Rom. 3. from 9. to 18. Ro. 1. 19. 30, 31, 32. Jer. 17. 9 Gen. 6. 5. cap. 8. 21. Eph. 4. 18, with many others. The scriptures, I say, they are able to give a man perfect instruction into any of the things of God, necessary to faith and godliness, if he hath but an honest heart, seriously to weigh and ponder the several things contained in them. As to instance in things more particular for the further clearing up of this : And first, if we come to the creation of the world

Wouldst thou know somewhat concerning that ? then read Gen. 1. and 2. chapters, and compare them with Psal. 33. at the 6. also Isa. 66. 2. Prov. 8. towards the end.

Wouldst thou know whether he made them of something or nothing. Read Heb. 11. 3.

Wouldst thou know whether he put forth any labour in making them as we do in making things ? read Psal. 33. 2.

If thou wouldst know whether man was made by God corrupt or upright, read Eccl. 7. 26. Gen. 1. 10. 18, 25, 31.

Wouldst thou know where God did place man after he had made him ? read Gen. 2. 15.

Wouldst thou know whether that man did live there all his time or not ? then read Gen. 3. 23, 24.

If thou wouldst know whether man be still in that state by nature, that God did place him in ? then read Eccl. 7. 26. and compare it with Ro. 5. 16. and Eph. 2. 1, 2, 3. God made man upright, but he hath sought out many inventions.

If thou wouldst know whether man were first beguiled, or the woman, that God made an help meet

for him, read Gen. 3. 6. and compare it with 1. Tim. 2. 14.

Wouldst thou know whether God looked upon Adam's eating the forbidden tree to be sin or no? read Rom. 5. 12, 13, 14, 15. and compare it with Gen. 3. 17.

Wouldst thou know whether it were the devil who beguiled them, or whether it was a natural serpent, such as do haunt the desolate places? read Gen. 3. 12. with Rev. 20. 1, 2 3.

Wouldst thou know whether that sin be imputed to us? read Rom. 5. 12, 13, 14. 15. and compare with Eph. 2. 2.

Wouldst thou know whether man was cursed for his sin? read Gal. 3. 10. Rom. 5. 15.

Wouldst thou know whether the curse did fall on man, or on the whole creation with him, compare Gen. 3. 7. with Rom. 8. 20, 21, 22.

Wouldst thou know whether man be defiled in every part of him, by the sin he hath committed? then read Isa. 1. 6.

Wouldst thou know man's inclination so soon as he is born? read Psal. 58. 3. the wicked are estranged from the womb, they go astray so soon as they be born.

Wouldst thou know whether man once fallen from God by transgression, can recover himself by all he can do? then read Rom. 3. 20. 23.

Wouldst thou know whether it be the desire of the heart of man by nature, to follow God in his own way or no? compare Gen. 6. 5. and Gen. 8. 21. with Hos. 11. 7.

Wouldst thou know how God's heart stood affected towards man before the world began? compare Eph. 1. 4. with 2 Tim. 2. 9.

Wouldst thou know whether sin were sufficient to draw God's love from his creatures? compare Jer. 3. 7. and Micah 7. 18. with Rom. 5. 6, 7, 8.

Wouldst thou know whether God's love did still abide towards his creatures for any thing they could

do to make him amends? then read Deut. 21. 5, 6, 7, 8.

Wouldst thou know how God could still love his creatures, and do his justice no wrong? read Rom. 3. 24, 25, 26. being justified freely by his grace, thro' the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation for sin, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. That is, God having his justice satisfied in the blood and righteousness, and death of his own son Jesus Christ for the sins of poor sinners, he can now save them that come to him, though never so great sinners, and do his justice no wrong, because it hath had a full and compleat satisfaction given it by that blood, 1 Joh. 2. 7, 8.

Wouldst thou know who he was, and what he was, that did out of his love die for sinners? then compare Joh. 3. 16, 17. Rom. 5. 8. with Isa. 9. 6.

Wouldst thou know whether this saviour had a body of flesh and bones, before the world was, or took it from the virgin Mary? then read Gal. 4. 4.

Wouldst thou know whether he did in that body bear all our sins, and where, then read 1 Pet. 2. 4. who bore our sins in his own body on the tree.

Wouldst thou know whether he did rise again after he was crucified, with the very same body, then read Luke 24. at ver. 38, 39, 40, 41.

Wouldst thou know whether he did eat or drink with his disciples after he arose out of the grave, then read Luke 24. 42. and Acts. 10. 41.

If thou wouldst be perswaded of the truth of this, that that very body, is now above the clouds, and stars, read Acts. 1. 9, 10, 11. and Luke 24. towards the end.

If thou wouldst know that the Quakers holds an error, that say the body of Christ is within them; consider the same scripture.

Wouldst thou know what that Christ that died for sinners is so doing in that place whether he is gone? then read Heb. 7. 24.

Wouldst thou know who shall have life by him. Read 1 Tim. 1. 14. 15. and Rom. 5. 6, 7, 8. which say. Christ died for sinners, for the ungodly.

Wouldst thou know whether they that live and die in their sins shall go to heaven or not? then read 1. Cor. 6. 10. Rev. 21. 8. 27. which saith, they shall have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone.

Wouldst thou know, whether man's obedience will obtain that Christ should die for them or save them? then read Mark 2. 17 Rom. 5. 7.

Wouldst thou know whether righteousness, justification and sanctification doth come through the virtue of Christ's blood? compare Rom. 5. 9. with Heb. 12. 12.

Wouldst thou know whether a natural man can abstain from the outward act of sin against the law, merely by a principle of nature? then compare well Rom. 2. 14. with Phil 3. 6.

Wouldst thou know whether a man by nature may know something of the invisible things of God? compare seriously Rom 20, 21. with Rom. 2. 14, 15.

Wouldst thou know how far a man may go on in a profession of the gospel, and yet fall away? then read Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6. they may taste the good word of God and the powers, of the world to come: they may taste the heavenly gift, and be partakers of the holy Ghost, and yet so fall as never to be recovered or renewed again unto repentance, see also Luke. 13.

Wouldst thou know how hard it is to go to heaven? read Mat. 7. 13, 14, Luke 13. 24.

Wouldst thou know whether a man by nature be a friend to God, or an enemy? then read Rom. 5. 11. Col. 1. 21.

Wouldst thou know what, or who they are that shall go to heaven? then read John 3. 3, 5, 7. and 2 Cor. 5. 17, also wouldst thou know what a sad

thing it is for any to turn their backs upon the gospel of Jesus Christ? then read Heb. 10. 28, 29. and Mark. 16. 16.

Wouldst thou know what is the wages of sin? then read Rom. 6. 23.

Wouldst thou know whether those do go that die unconverted to the faith of Christ? then read Psal. 9. 17. and Isa. 14. 9.

Reader, here might I spend many sheets of paper, yea, I might upon this subject, write a very great book, but I shall now forbear, desiring thee to be very conversant in the scriptures, for they are they that will testify of Jesus Christ, John. 5. 39. the Bereans were counted noble upon this account; these were more noble than those of Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind; and searched the scriptures daily, &c. Acts. 17. 11. but here let me give thee one caution, that is, have a care that thou do not satisfy thy self with a bare search of them, without a real application of him whom they testify of, to thy soul, lest instead of faring better for thy doing this work, thou fare a great deal the worse, and thy condemnation be very much heightened in that, tho' thou didst read so often the sad state of those that die in sin, and the glorious estate of them that close in with Christ, yet thou thy self shouldst be such a fool as to lose Jesus Christ, notwithstanding thy hearing and reading so plentifully of him.

They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.]

As if he should say, what need have they, that one should be sent to them from the dead? have they not Moses and the prophets? hath not Moses told them the danger of living in sin? Deut. 27. from ver. 15. to ver. 26. and Chap. 28. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, &c. to the end of the chap. also Chap. 29. 18, 19, 20, 21. hath he not there told them what a sad state these persons are in, that deceive themselves with the deceit of their hearts, saying, they shall have peace,

though they follow their sins in these words; and when he heareth the words of this curse he bleſſeth himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace tho' I go on or walk in the imagination of my heart, to add drunkenness to thirst. The Lord will not spare that man, but then the anger of the Lord, and his jealousy shall smoke against him, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lye upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven.

Again, did not Moses write of the saviour that was to come afterwards into the world? Deut. 18. 18. nay, have not all the prophets from Samuel, with all those that follow after, prophesied, and foretold these things? therefore what need have they that I should work such a miracle as to send one from the dead unto them? they have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.

From whence observe again, that God doth honour the writings of Moses and the prophets as much, nay more than if one should rise from the dead: should not a people seek unto their God? what seek for the living among the dead? to the law and to the testimonies (saith God) if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. Isa. 8. 19. 20. and let me tell you plainly, I do believe that the devil knows this full well, which makes him labour to beget in the hearts of his disciples and followers, light thoughts of them; and doth perswade them, that even a motion from their own beguiled conscience, or from his own wicked spirit, is to be observed and obeyed before them: when the very apostle of Jesus Christ, tho' he heard a voice from the excellent glory, saying, this is my beloved son, &c. yet writing to the churches, he commends the writings of the prophets before it, saying, we have also a more sure word of prophecy, unto which ye do well to take heed &c. 2. Pet. 1. 17, 18, 19. now if thou doubtest whether in that place be meant the scriptures, the words of the prophets or no; read but the next verse, where he addeth for a certain confirmation thereof

these words : knowing this first, that there is no prophesy of the scriptures of any private interpretation : for prophesy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the holy Ghost.

And therefore, what a sad thing is it for those that go about to disown the scriptures. I tell you however they may slight them now, yet when they come into hell they will see their folly? they have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.

Further, who are they, that are to tossed to and fro with the several winds of doctrine that have been broached in these days, but such for the most part, as have had a light esteem of the scriptures; for the ground of error (as Christ saith) is because they know not them, Mark 12. 24. and indeed, it is just with God to give them over to follow their own dark blinded consciences, to be led into errors, that they might be damned into hell, who did not believe that the things contained in the scriptures were the truth, that they might be saved and go to heaven. I cannot well tell how to have done speaking for, and on the scriptures side, only this I consider, a word is enough to the wise : and therefore I shall commit these things into the hands of them that are of God : and as for the rest, I shall say to them, rather than God will save them from hell with the breach of his holy word, if they had a thousand souls a-piece, God would destroy them all; for the scriptures cannot be broken, John 10. 35.

Verse 30. And he said, nay, father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead, they would repent.

THE Verse before, you know, as I told you, it was part of an answer to such as lose their souls : so is it a vindication of the scriptures of Moses and the prophets; they have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.

Now this verse is an answer to what was said in the former; and such an one as hath in it a rejection of the

former answer. Nay, father Abraham, nay, saith he, do not say so, do not put them off with this ; send one from the dead, and then there will be some hopes. 'Tis true, thou speakest of the scripture, of Moses and the prophets, and sayest, let them hear them ; but these things are not so well as I could wish, I had rather thou wouldst send one from the dead. In these words therefore, nay, father Abraham, there is a repulse given. Nay, let it not be so ; nay, I do not like of that answer : hear Moses and the prophets ; the same expression is used by Christ, Luke. 13. 2. 3. think you that they upon whom the tower of Siloe fell, were sinners above others ? I tell you nay, for except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. So here, nay father Abraham, &c.

By this word, nay, therefore is signified a rejecting the first answer.

Now observe, I pray you, the reason why he says nay, is because God doth put over all those that will be saved, to observe and receive the truth contained in scripture, and believe that. To have a high esteem of them, and to love and search them, as Christ saith, search the scriptures—for they are they which testify of me. John 5. 36. But the damned say, nay, as if he had said, This is the thing ; to be short, my brethren are unbelievers, and do not regard the word of God. I know it by my self, for when I was in the world, it was so with me ; many a good sermon did I hear, many a time was I admonished, desired, intreated, beseeched, threatned, forwarned of what I now suffer : But alas ! I was ignorant, self conceited, surly, obstinate, and rebellious. Many a time the preachers told me hell would be my portion, the devil would wreck his malice on me, God would pour on me his sore displeasure : but he had as good have preached to the stock, to the post, to the stones I trod on : his words rang in mine ears, but I kept them from my heart. I remember he alledged many a scripture, but those I valued not ; the scriptures, thought I, what are they ! A dead letter, a little ink.

and paper, of three or four shillings price. Alas ! what is the scripture ; give me a ballad, a new book, George of horse back or Beuis of Southampton, give me some book that teaches curious arts, that tells of old fables ; but for the holy scriptures I cared not. And as it was with me then, so it is with my brethren now ; we were all in one spirit, loved all the same sins, slighted all the same counsels, promises, encouragements and threatnings of the scriptures ; and they are still as I left them, still in unbelief, still provoking God, and rejecting good counsel, so hardened in their ways, so bent to follow sin, that let the scriptures be shewed to them daily, let the messengers of Christ preach till their hearts ake, till they fall down dead with preaching, they will rather trample it under foot, and swine-like rent them. Then close in with those gentle and blessed proffers of the gospel.

Nay, father Abraham, but if one should rise from the dead, they would repent, though they have Moses and the prophets, (the scriptures) they will not repent and close in with Jesus Christ, though the scriptures do witness against them. If therefore there be any good done to them, they must have it another way ? I think, saith he, it would work much on them if one should rise from the dead. And this truth indeed is so evident, that ungodly ones have a light esteem of the scriptures, that it needs not many strong arguments to prove it, being so evidently manifested by their every days practice, both in words and actions, almost in all things they say and do. Yet for the satisfaction of the reader, I shall shew you by a scripture or two (though I might shew many) that this was, and is true with the generality of the world. See the words of Nehemiah in his ninth chapter concerning the children of Israel, who, though the Lord afforded them mercy upon mercy, as it is from verse nineteen to verse twenty five ; yet verse twenty six, saith he, nevertheless they were disobedient for all thy goodness towards them, and rebelled against thee (but how) and cast thy law behind their back : slew

the prophets which testified against them, to turn them to thee, and they wrought great provocations. Observe, first, they sinned against mercy. And then, secondly, they slighted the law, or word of God. Thirdly, they slew the prophets that declared it unto them. Fourthly, the Lord counts it a great provocation. See Heb. 3. from Ver. 10. to Ver. 19. and see Zach. 7. 11, 12. but they refused to hearken (saith he there of the wicked) and pulled away their shoulders, and stopped their ears that they should not hear the law. Yea, they made their hearts hard as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the Lord of hosts sent unto them by his spirit in the former prophets, &c. I pray you, here is also,

First, a refusing to hearken to the words of the prophets,

Secondly, That they might so do they stopped their ears,

Thirdly, If any thing was to be done, they pulled away their shoulder.

Fourthly, To affect this, they labour to make their hearts hard as an adamant stone.

Fifthly, And all this, lest they should hear and close in with Jesus, and live, and be delivered from the wrath to come. All which things do hold out an unwillingness to submit to, and embrace the words of God, and so Jesus Christ, which is testified of by them. Many other scriptures I might bring in for confirmation of the thing, as that in Amos. 7. 12, 13. also 2 Sam. 2. 24, 25. 2 Chr. 25. 15, 16. Jer. 7. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27. and chap. 16. 12. read also seriously, that saying, in 2 Chr. 36. 15. where he saith, and the Lord God of their fathers sent unto them by his messengers rising up betimes, because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place. And did they make them welcome? No, but mocked the messengers of God and despised his words: and was that all? No, they misused his prophets. How long? until the wrath of the Lord arose against them: till

there was no remedy. See also Jer. 29. 19. chap. 25. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. Luke, 11. 49.

And besides, the conversation of almost all men doth bear witness to the same, both religious and profane persons, in that they daily neglect, reject and turn their backs upon the plain testimony of the scriptures.

As 1. Take the threatnings laid down in holy writ, and how are they disregarded? There are but a few places in the bible, but there are threatnings against one sin or other; against drunkards, swearers, liars, proud persons, strumpets, whoremongers, covetous, railers, extortioners, thieves, lazy persons: In a word, all manner of sins are reprov'd, and without faith in the Lord Jesus, there is a sore punishment to be executed on the committers of them; and all this made mention of in the scriptures.

But for all this, how thick, and by heaps do these wretches walk up and down our streets? Do but go into the ale-houses, and you shall see almost every room besprinkled with them, so foaming out their own shame, that it is enough to make the heart of a saint to tremble, insomuch that they would not be bound to have any society with them any long while for all the world. For as the ways of the godly are not liked of by the wicked, even so the way of the wicked are an abomination to the just, Prov. 29. 27. Psal. 120. 5. 6.

The scriptures say, cursed is the man that trusteth in man that maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. Jerem. 17. 5.

And yet, how many poor souls are there in the world, that stand in so much awe and dread of men, and do so highly esteem their favour, that they will rather venture their souls in the hands of the devil with their favour, than they will fly to Jesus Christ for the salvation of their soul? Nay, though they be convinced in their souls, that the way is the way of God; yet how do they labour to stifle conviction, and turn their ears away from the truth, and all be-

cause they will not lose the favour of an opposite neighbour? Oh! I dare not for my master, my brother, my landlord, I shall lose his favour, his house of work, and so decay my calling. O! saith another, I would willingly go in this way; but for my father, he chides and tells me, he will not stand my friend when I come to want; I shall never enjoy a penny-worth of his goods; he will disinherit me. And I dare not, saith another, for my husband, for he will be railing, and tells me, he will turn me out of doors, he will beat me, and cut off my legs. But I tell you, if any of these, or any other things be so prevalent with thee now, as to keep thee from seeking after Christ in his ways; they will also be so prevalent with God against thee, as to make them cast off thy soul because thou didst rather trust man than God; and delight the embracing of man rather than in the favour of the Lord.

Again, the scriptures saith, He that being often re-proved, hardneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy, Prov. 29. 1. Yet many are so far from turning, though they have been convinced of their wretched state an hundred times, that when convictions, or troubles for sin comes on their consciences, they go on still in the same manner, resisting and choaking the same, though remediless destruction be hard at their heels.

3. Again, thou hast heard say, Unless a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven, John 3. 2. 5. 7. And yet thou goest on in a natural state, an unregenerate condition; nay, thou dost resolve never to turn nor be changed, tho' hell be appointed on purpose to swallow up such, Isa. 14. 9. Psal. 9. 17. The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.

4. Again, the scripture saith plainly, that he that loveth and maketh a lie, shall have his part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, Rev. 21. 8. 27. And yet thou art so far from dreading it, that it is thy delight to jest and jeer, and lie for a penny, or

two pence, or six pence gain. And also if thou canst make the rest of thy companions merry, by telling things that are false of them that are better than thyself, thou dost not care a straw: or if thou hearest a lie from, or of another, thou wilt tell it, and swear to the truth of it. O miserable!

5. Thou hast heard and read, That he that believes not shall be damned, Mark 16. 16. And that all men have not faith, 2 Thess. 3. 2. And yet thou dost not so much disregard these things, that it is like thou didst scarce ever so much as examine seriously whether thou wert in the faith or no; but dost content thyself with the hypocrite's hope, which at the last God will cut off, and count it no better than the spider's web, Job 8. 13. 14. or the house that is builded on the sands, Luke 6. 49. Nay, thou peradventure dost flatter thyself, and thinkest that thy faith is as good as the best of them all; when alas, poor soul, thou mayst have no saving faith at all; which thou hast not if thou beest not born again and made a new creature, 2 Cor. 2. 17.

6. Thou hast heard, That he that neglects God's great salvation, shall never escape his great damnation, Heb. 2. 3. compared with Luke 14. 24. and Rev. 14. 19. 20. And yet when thou art invited, intreated, and beseeched to come in (Luke 14. 17. 18. 2 Cor. 5. 19. 20. Rom. 12. 1.) thou wilt make any excuse to serve the turn. Nay, thou wilt be so wicked as to put off Christ time after time, notwithstanding he is so freely proffered to thee; a little ground, a few oxen, a farm, a wife, a two penny matter, a play; nay, the fear of a mock, a scoff, or a jeer, is of greater weight to draw thee back, than the salvation of thy soul to draw thee forward.

7. And thou hast heard, That whosoever will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God, Jam. 4. 4. But thou regardest not those things, but contrariwise, rather than thou wilt be out of the friendship and favour of this world, thou wilt sin against thine own conscience, and get thyself into favour by fawning and flattering of the world. Yea, rather than

thou wilt go without it, thou wilt dissemble, lie, back-bite thy neighbour, and an hundred other tricks thou wilt have.

8. You have heard that the day of judgment is near, in which you and I, all of us must appear before the tribunal of Jesus Christ, and there be made to give an account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead; even of all that ever we did, yea, of all our sins in thought, word and deed, and shall certainly be damned for them too, if we close not in with our Lord Jesus Christ, and what he hath done and suffered for eternal life, and that not notionally or traditionally, but really and savingly, in the power, and by the operation of the spirit, through faith (Eccl. 11. 9. 12. 14. Heb. 9. 27. Acts 10. 42. Acts 17. 30. 31. 2 Cor. 5. 10. Rev 20. 12.) And I saw the dead, small and great stand before God, and the books were opened, and another book was opened, which is the book of life, and the dead were judged out of those things that were written in the books. There is the book of the creatures, the book of conscience, the book of the Lord's remembrance, the book of the law, the book of the gospel (Rom. 1. 20. compare with Rom. 2. 12. 15. Rev. 6. v. 19. John 12. 48.) Then shall he separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep on the right hand, and the goats on his left; (Matth. 25. 30. 31. 32.) And shall say to them on his right hand, Come ye blessed, verse 34. but to the other go, or depart ye cursed, verse 41. Yet notwithstanding the scriptures do so plainly and plentifully speak of these things, alas! who is there that is weaned from the world, and from their sins and pleasures, to fly from the wrath to come? Mat. 3. 7. Notwithstanding the scripture saith also, That heaven and earth shall pass away, rather than one jot or one tittle of the word shall fail, till all be fulfilled, they are so certain, Luke 22. 27.

But leaving the threatnigs, let us come to the promises, and speak somewhat of them, and you may see

how light men make of them, and how little they set by them, notwithstanding the mouth of the Lord hath spoken them.

As first, Turn ye fools, ye scorers, ye simple ones, at my reproof, and behold I will pour out my spirit unto you, Prov. 1. 23. And yet persons had rather be in their foolishness and scorning still, and had rather embrace some filthy lust, than the holy undefiled and blessed spirit of Christ, thorough the promise, though by it as many as receive it, are sealed unto the day of redemption, Ephes. 4. 30. And although he that lives and dies without it, is none of Christ's, Rom. 8. 9.

God hath said, if thou do but come to him in Christ, though your sins be as red as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; and he will by no means cast thee away; compare Isa. 1. 18. with John 6. 27. yet poor souls will not come to Christ that they might have life (John 5. 41.) but rather after their hardness and impenitent heart, treasure up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation, of the righteous judgment of God, Rom. 2. 4. 5. 6.

3. Christ Jesus hath said in the word of truth, that if any man will serve and follow him, where he is, there shall also his servant be, John 12. 16. but yet poor souls chuse rather to follow sin, satan, and the world, though their companions be devils, and damned souls ever after, Mat. 25. 41.

4. He hath also said, seek first the kingdom of God, and all other things shall be added. But let who so will seek after the kingdom of heaven, first for them; for they will take the first time while time serves to get the things of this life; and if it be so, that they must needs seek after heaven, or else be damned, they will stay till they have more leisure, or till they can better attend to it; or till they have other things handsome about them; or till they are older, when they have little else to do; or when they come to be sick and to die. Then Lord have

mercy upon them! though it be ten thousand to one but they perish for ever.

For commonly the Lord hath this way to deal with such sinners who put him off when he is striving with them, either to laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear cometh (Prov. 1. 26. 28) or else send them to the Gods they have served, which are the devils, Judg. 10. 13. 14. Go to the gods you have served, and let them deliver you, saith he; compare this with John 8. 44.

5. He hath said, there is no man that forsaketh father or mother, wife or children, or lands for his sake and the gospel, but shall have an hundred fold in this world, with persecutions, and in the world to come life everlasting, Mark 10. 29. 30.

But men for the most part are so far off from believing the certainty of this, they will scarce lose the earning of a penny to hear the word of God, the gospel of salvation. Nay, they will neither go themselves, nor suffer others to go (if they can help it) without threatening to do them a mischief, if it lye in their way: Nay further, many are so far from parting from any wordly gain, for Christ's sake and the gospel, that they are still striving, by hook and crook, as we say, by swearing, lying, cozening, stealing, covetousness, extortion, oppression, forgery, bribery, flattery, or any other way to get more, though they get together with these, death, wrath, damnation, hell, the devil, and all the plagues that God can pour upon them. And if any do not run with them to the same excess of riot, but rather for all their threats, will be so bold and careless (as they call it) as to follow the ways of God; if they can do no more, yet they will whet their tongues like a sword to wound them, and do them the greatest mischief they can, both in speaking against them to neighbours, to wives, to husbands, to landlords, and raising false reports of them. But let such take heed, lest they be in such a state and woe-ful condition as he was in, who said in vexation and anguish of soul, One drop of cold water to cool my tongue.

Thus might I add many things out of the holy writ, both threatings and promises, besides those heavenly counsels, loving reproofs, free invitations to all sorts of sinners both old and young, rich and poor, bond and free, wise and unwise; all which have been, now are, and it is to be feared, as long as this world lasts, will be trampled under the feet of those swine (I call them not men) who will continue in the same. But take a review of some of them.

1. Counsel.

What heavenly counsel is that where Christ saith, Buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear, Rev. 3. 17. 18. Also that, Ho, every one that thirsteth, come to the waters: yea come, buy wine and milk without money and without price, Isa. 55. 1. Hear and your souls shall live, ver. 3. Lay hold of my strength that you may make peace with me, and you shall make peace with me, Isa. 27. 5.

2. Instruction.

What instruction is here!

Hear instruction and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me (saith Christ) watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors: for whoso findeth me, findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord, Prov. 8. 32. 33. 34. 35. Take heed that no man deceive you by any means. Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life, John 6. 27. Strive to enter in at the strait gate, Luke 13. 24. Believe on the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved, Acts 16. 31. Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits. Quench not the spirit. Lay hold on eternal life. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven, Mat. 5. 16. Take heed and beware of hypocrisy, watch and be sober, learn of me (saith Christ) come unto me.

3. Forewarning.

What forewarning is here!

Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke, then a great ransom cannot deliver thee, Job 36. 18. Be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong, for I have heard from the Lord God of Hosts, a consumption even determined on the whole earth, Isa. 28. 22. Beware therefore, lest that come upon you that is written: Behold, ye despisers and wonder and perish, for behold, I work a work in your days, which ye shall in no wise believe though a man declare it unto you, Acts 13. 40. 41. Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall, 1 Cor. 10. 12. Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation, Luke 22. 40. Let us fear therefore, lest a promise being made or left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it, Heb. 4. 1. I will therefore put you in remembrance, though you once knew this, how that the Lord having saved the people out of Ægypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not, Jude 5. Hold fast that thou hast, let no man take thy crown, Rev. 3. 11.

4. Comfort.

What comfort is here!

He that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out, John 6. 37. Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest, Mat. 11. 28. Be of good cheer thy sins are forgiven thee. I will never leave thee nor forsake thee, for I have loved thee with an everlasting love, Jer. 13. 3. I lay down my life for my sheep, I lay down my life that they might have life, I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee, 2 Cor. 6. 2. Though their sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be as crimson they shall be as wool. For I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, as a thick cloud thy sins; return unto me, for I have redeemed thee, Isa. 44. 22.

5. Grief to those that fall short.

O sad grief!

How have I hated instruction, and mine heart despised reproof, and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me, Prov. 7. 11, 12, 13. they shall curse their king and their God, and look upward. And they shall look to the earth, and behold trouble and darkness and dimness of anguish: And they shall be driven into darkness, Isa. 8. ver 21. 22. He hath dispersed abroad, he hath given to the poor, his righteousness endureth for ever—the wicked shall see it, and be grieved, he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away; the desire of the wicked shall perish, Psal. 112. 9 10.

There shall be weeping, when ye shall see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of heaven, and your selves thrust out, Luke. 13. 26, 27, 28. all which things are slighted by the world.

Thus much in short touching this, that ungodly men undervalue the scriptures, and give no credit to them, when the truth that is contained in them is held forth in simplicity unto them, but rather cry out, nay, but if one should rise from the dead, then they think something might be done; when alas, tho' signs and wonders are wrought by the hands of those that preach the gospel those poor creatures would never the sooner convert, though they suppose they should, as is evident by the carriages of their fore-runners, who albeit, the Lord Jesus Christ himself did confirm his doctrine by miracles, as opening blind eyes, casting out of devils, and raising the dead they were so far from receiving either him, or his doctrine, that they put him to death for his pains, tho' he had done so many miracles among them; yet they believed not in him, John. 12. 37. but to pass this, I shall lay down some of the grounds of their rejecting and undervaluing the scriptures and so pass on.

1. Because they do not believe that they are the word of God, but rather suppose them to be the in-

ventions of men, written by some politicians, on purpose to make poor ignorant people to submit to some religion and government. Though they do not say this, yet their practices testify the same; as he that when he hears the words of the curse, yet bleisseth himself in his heart, and saith he shall have peace, tho' God saith he shall have none, Deut. 29. 18, 19, 20. and this must needs be, for, did but men believe this, that it is the word of God, then they must believe that he that spake it, is true, therefore shall every word and tittle be fulfilled, and if they come once to this, unless they be stark mad, they will have a care how they do throw themselves under the lash of eternal vengeance. For the reason why the Thessalonians received the word was because they believed it was the word of God and not the word of man, which did effectually work in them by their thus believing. 1 Theff. 2. 13, 14. when ye received the word which ye heard of us, saith he, ye received it not as the word of man but (as it is indeed) the word of God, which effectually worketh in you that believe. So that did a man but receive it in hearing, or reading, or meditating, as it is the word of God, they would be converted. But the word preached doth not profit, not being mixed with faith in them that hear it, Heb. 4. 1, 2.

2. Because they do not indeed see themselves by nature, heirs of that exceeding wrath and vengeance that the scriptures testify of. For did they but consider what God intends to do with those that live and die in a natural state, it would either sink them into despair, or make them flee for refuge to the hope that is set before them. But if there be never such sins committed, and never so great wrath denounced, and the time of execution be never so near; yet if the party that is guilty be senseless and altogether ignorant thereof, he will be careless, and regards it nothing at all. And that man by nature is in this condition, it is evident. For take the same man that is senseless, and ignorant of that misery he is in by na-

ture ; I say, take him at another time when he is a little awakned, and then you shall hear him roar, and cry out so long as trouble is upon him, and a sense of the wrath of God hanging over his head ; good sirs, what must I do to be saved ?

Though the same man at another time (when his conscience is fallen asleep, and grown hard) will lie like the smith's dog at the foot of the anvil, though the fire sparks fly in his face. But as I said before when any one is a little awakened, **O** what work will one verse, one line, nay one word of holy scriptures make in his heart ? he cannot eat, sleep, work, keep company with his former companions ; and all because he is afraid that the damnation spoken of in scripture, will fall to his share, like Balaam, who said, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord, Numb. 22. 18. so long as he had something of the word of the Lord with authority, severity, and power on his heart ; but at another time he could teach Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, Rev. 2. 14.

3. Because the carnal priests do tickle the ears of their hears with vain philosophy and deceit, and thereby hardens their hearts against the simplicity of the gospel and word of God, which things the apostle admonished those that have a mind to close in with Christ to avoid : Col. 2. 8. saying, beware lest any man (be he what he will) spoil you, through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, and rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. And you who muzzle up your people in ignorance with Aristotle, Plato, and the rest of the heathenish philosophers, and preach little if any thing of Christ rightly, I say unto you, that you will find you have sinned against God, and beguiled your hearers, when God shall in the judgment day, lay the cause of the damnation of many thousands of souls to your charge, and say, he will require their blood at your hands, Ezek. 33. 6.

4. Another reason why the carnal unbelieving

world do so slight the scriptures, the word of God, is because the judgment spoken of in the scripture, is not presently executed on the transgressors. Because sentence against an evil act is not speedily executed, therefore the hearts of the sons of men are wholly set in them to do evil. Eccles. 8. 11. because God doth not presently strike the poor wretch as soon as he sins. but waits and forbears, and is patient; therefore the world judging God to be unfaithful, go to it again, and again, and every time grow harder and harder, till at last God is forced, either to stretch out his mighty power to turn them, or else send death with the devil and hell to fetch them. Thou thoughtest (saith God) that I was altogether such an one as thy self, but I will reprove thee and set them in order before thy face. Now, consider this ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver, Psal. 50, 20, 21.

5. Another reason why the blind world do slight the authority of scripture, is, because they give ear to the devil who through his subtilty casteth false evasions, and corrupt interpretations on them, rendring them not so point blank the mind of God, and a rule for direction to poor souls, perswading them that they must give ear and way to something else besides, and beyond that: or else he labours to render it vile and contemptible, by perswading them that it is a dead letter, which indeed they know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm. For the scripture is not so dead, but that the knowledge of it is able to make any man wise unto salvation through faith and love which is in Christ Jesus, 3 Tim 3. 15. and is profitable for instruction, reproof and correction in righteousness. that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished to all good works, verse 17.

And where it is said, the letter killeth, he meaneth the law, as it is ministration of damnation, or a covenant of works, and so indeed it doth kill, and must do so, because it is just, for as much as the party that is under the same, is not able to yield to. a compleat

and continual obedience. But yet I will call Peter and Paul to witness, that the scriptures are of a very glorious concernment, in as much as in them is held forth to us the way of life: and also, in that they do administer good ground of hope to us, Rom. 15, 4. For whatsoever things were written afore time, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scripture, might have hope. And again, Rom. 16. 25, 26. now to him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ; according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept hid since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith. And therefore, whosoever they be that slight the scriptures they slight that which is no less than the word of God; and they who slight that, slight him that spake it; and they that do so, let them look to themselves, for God will be revenged on such. Much more might be said to this thing, but I would not be tedious.

A word or two more, so I have done with this. Consider the danger of slighting the words of the prophets or apostles, whether they be correction, reproof, admonition, forewarning, or the blessed invitations and promises contained in them.

1. Such souls do provoke God to anger, and to execute his vengeance on them. They refused to hearken, they pulled away their shoulders, they stopped their ears, lest they should hear the law, and they made their hearts as an adamant stone, that they might not hear the law, and the words that were spoken to them by his spirit in the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath upon them, Zach. 7.

II. 12.

2. God will not regard them in their calamity. Because I called, and ye refused, I stretched out my hand, and no man regarded, but set at nought all my counsels, and would have none of my reproof: I al-

so will laugh at your calamities, and mock when your fear cometh. When their fear cometh as desolation. and their destruction like a whirl-wind Then shall they call, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me, Prov. 1. 25, 26. 27.

3. God doth commonly give up such men to delusions to believe lies. Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, therefore God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned, 2 Thess. 2. 11, 12.

4. In a word, they that do continue so, reject and slight the word of God, they are such, for the most part as are ordained to be damned. Old Eli his sons not hearkening to the voice of their father, reproving them for their sins, but disobeying his voice, it is said, it was because the Lord would slay them, 1. Sam. 2. 15 again, see in 2 Chr. 25 15, 16. Amaziah having sinned against the Lord, he sends to him a prophet to reprove him; but Amaziah says, forbear, wherefore shouldest thou be smitten? (he did not hearken to the word of God) then the prophet forbear, saying, I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast not hearkened to my counsel. Read ther efore, and the Lord give thee understanding. For a miserable end will those have that go on in sinning against God, rejecting his word.

Other things might have been observed from this verse which at this time I shall pass by; partly because the sum of them hath been touched already, and may be more clearly hinted at in the following verse: and therefore I shall speak a few words to the next verse; and so draw towards a conclusion.

Verse 31. And he said unto him, if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be perswaded, though one rise from the dead.

AND he said] that is, and God made answer to the words spoken in the verse before, and he said unto him, if they hear not Moses, &c. As if he had

said, Moses was a man of great renown, a man of worthy note, a man that talked with God face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend; the words that Moses spake, were such as I commanded him to speak; let who will question them, I will own them, credit them, bless them that close in with them, and curse those that reject them.

I my self sent the prophets, they did not run of their own heads; I gave them a commission; I thrust them out and told them what they should say. In a word, they have told the world what my mind is to do, both to sinners and to saints; they have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them. Therefore, he that shall reject and turn his back either upon the threatnings, counsels, admonitions, invitations, promises or whatsoever else I have commanded them to speak, as to salvation and life, and to directions therein, shall be sure to have a share in the many curses that they have spoken, and the doctrine that is pronounced by them. Again, if they hear not Moses and the prophets, &c. As if he had said, thou wouldst have me send one from the dead unto them; what needs that? They have my mind already, I have declared unto them what I intend to stand to, both for saving them that believe, and damning them that do not. That therefore which I have said, I will make good, whether they hear or forbear. And as for this desire of yours, you had as good desire me to make a new bible, and so to revoke my first saying by the mouth of my prophets. But I am God and not man, and my word is immutable, unchangeable, and shall stand as fast as my decrees can make it, heaven and earth shall pass away, but one jot or one tittle of my word shall not pass. If thou hadst ten thousand brethren, and every one in danger of losing his soul, if he did not close in with what is contained and recorded in the scriptures of truth, they must even every one of them perish, and be for ever damned in hell; for the scriptures cannot be broken. I did not send them so unadvisedly to recal it again by another consideration.

No, for I speak in righteousness and in judgment, Isa. 63. 1, 2, 3. and in much wisdom and counsel. It being therefore gone out of my mouth in this manner, it shall not return in vain, until it hath accomplished the thing whereto I have sent it.

But again, thou supposed that miracles and wonders will work more on them, which makes thee say ; send one from the dead : But herein thou art mistaken, for I have proved them with that once and again by more than one, or two, or three of my servants. How many miracles did my servant Moses work by commandment from me in the land of Egypt, at the Red-sea, and in the wilderness ? yet they of that generation were never the sooner converted for that, but notwithstanding rebelled and lusted, and in their hearts turned back into Egypt, Acts. 7. How many miracles did Samuel, David, Elias, Elisha, Daniel, and the prophets together with my son, who raised the dead, cast out devils, made them to see that were born blind gave and restored limbs ? yet for all this (as I said before) they hated him, they crucified him. I raised him again from the dead, and he appeared to his disciples, who were called, and chosen, and faithful, and he gave them commandment and commission to go and testify the truth of this to the world ; and confirm the same, he enabled them to speak with divers tongues and to work miracles most plentifully ; yet there was great persecution raised against them, inso-much that but a few of them died in their beds. And therefore though thou thinkest that a miracle will do so much with the world, yet I say, No : For if they will not believe Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one should rise from the dead.

From these words therefore take notice of this truth ; namely, that those who reject and believe not Moses and the prophets, are a very hard hearted people, and will not be persuaded though one rise from the dead.

They that regard not the holy scriptures, to turn

to God, finding them to testify of his goodness and mercy, there is but little hopes of their salvation ; for they will not. Mark, they will not be perswaded though one should rise from the dead. This truth is confirmed by Jesus Christ himself ; if you read John 5. where the Lord is speaking of himself, that he is the very Christ, he brings in four or five witnesses to back what he said. First, John Baptist. 2. The works that his father gave him to do. 3. his father speaking from heaven. 4. the testimony of the scriptures ; when all this was done, seeing yet they would not believe, he lays the fault upon one of these two things.

1. Their regarding an esteem among men.

2. Their not believing of the prophets writings, even Moses and the rest. For had ye believed Moles (saith he) ye would have believed. For he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how can ye believe my words ? now, I say, he that shall slight the scriptures, and the testimony of the prophets in them concerning Jesus Christ, must needs be in great danger of losing his soul, if he abide in this condition : because he that slights the testimony, doth also slight the thing testified of, let him say the contrary never so often. For as Jesus Christ hath here laid down the reason of mens not receiving him ; so the apostle in another place lays down the reason again with an high and mighty aggravation, 1. John 5. 10. saying, he that believeth on the son of God, hath the witness in himself, he that believeth not God, hath made him a lyar, because he believeth not the record, Mark, the record that God gave of his son. The record you will say, what is that ? why even the testimony that God gave of him by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began, Acts 3. 20. that is, God sending his holy spirit into the hearts of his servants, the prophets and apostles, he, by his spirit in them did bear witness or record to the truth of salvation by his son Jesus, both before and after his coming, and thus is that place also to be understood, which saith, there are three that bear record on earth, the

spirit, the water, and the blood. That is the spirit in the apostles, which preached him to the world, as is clear, if you read seriously 1. Theff. 4. 8. the apostle speaking of Jesus Christ and obedience to God through him, saith thus, now he that despiseth, despiseth not us, but God: but it is you that spake; true, but it is by and through the spirit, he therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who also hath given us of his holy spirit. This is therefore a mighty confirmation of this truth, that he that slights the record or testimony that God by his spirit, in his prophets and apostles hath testified unto us, slights the testimony of the spirit, who moved them to speak these things; and if so, then I would fain know, how any man can be saved by Jesus Christ, that slights the testimony concerning Christ; yea, the testimony of his own spirit concerning his own self? 'Tis true; men may pretend to have the testimony of the spirit, and from that conceit, set a low esteem on the holy scriptures; but that spirit that dwelleth in them, and teacheth them so to do, it is no better than the spirit of satan, though it calls it self by the name of the spirit of Christ. To the law therefore and to the testimony, try them by that, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

The apostle Peter, when he speaks of the glorious voice that he had from his excellent Majesty, saying of Christ, this is my beloved son, hear him; saith thus to them whom he wrote unto; you have also a more sure word of prophesy (or of the prophets, for so you may read it) unto which you do well that you take heed. That is, tho' we tell you that we had this excellent testimony from his own mouth, evidently, yet you have the prophets: we tell you this, and ye need not doubt of the truth of it; but if you should, yet you may not, must not, ought not to question them: search therefore unto them, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts; that is, until by the same spirit that gave forth the scrip-

tures, you find the truth confirmed to your souls, which you have recorded in the scriptures; that this word of prophesy, or of the prophets, is the scriptures, read on; For (saith he) knowing this first, that no prophesy of the scriptures is of any private interpretation, &c. 2. Pet. 1. 18, 19, 20. but you will say, what needs all this ado, and why is all this time and pains spent in speaking to this, that is surely believed already? this is a thing received by all, that they believe the scriptures to be the word of God, that sure word of prophesy; and therefore you need not spend your time in proving these things, and the truth of them, seeing we grant and confess the truth of it, before you begin to speak your judgment of them.

Ans. The truths of God cannot be born witness unto too often, you may as well say, you need not preach Jesus Christ so much, seeing he hath been and is received for the true Messias already.

2. Though many may suppose that they do believe the scriptures, yet if they were but well examined, you will find them either by word of mouth, or else by conversation, to deny, reject, and slight the holy scriptures. 'Tis true, there is a notional, and historical ascent in the head, I say in the head of many, or most, to the truth contained in the scripture: but try them, I say, and you shall find but a little, if any, of the faith or the operation of God in the hearts of poor men, to believe the scriptures, and things contained in them. Many, yea, most men believe the scriptures, as they believe a fable, a story, a tale, of which there is no certainty; but alas! there are but few do in deed, and in truth believe the scriptures to be the very word of God.

Obj. But you will say, this seems strange to me.

Ans. And it seems as true to me, and I doubt not but to make it manifest, that there are but few, yea, very few, that do effectually (for that I aim at) believe the scriptures and the things contained in, and

spoken of by them. But to make this appear, and that to purpose (if God will) I shall lay you down the several operations that the scriptures have on them, who do effectually believe the things contained in 'em.

1. He that doth effectually believe the scriptures, hath in the first place been killed, I say killed by the authority of the holy scriptures; struck stark dead in a spiritual sense, by the holy scripture, being set home by that spirit, which gave them forth upon the soul. The letter killeth; the letter strikes men dead, 2 Cor. 2. 6. And this Paul witnessed, and found, before he could say, I believe all that the prophets have spoken. Where he saith, I was alive without the law once; that is, in my natural state, before the law was set on my heart with power; but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died, Rom. 7. 9. And that law that was ordained of life, I found to be unto death; for sin taking the occasion by the commandment deceived me, and thereby slew me, ver. 10. Now that which is called the letter in Cor. is called the law in Rom. 7. which by its power and operation, as it is wielded by the spirit of God, doth in the first place kill and slay all those that are enabled to believe the scriptures. I kill, saith God; that is with my law, I pierce, I wound, I prick men into the very heart, by shewing them their sins against the law, Deut. 32. 69. Acts 2. 36. 37. And he that is ignorant of this, is also ignorant of, and doth not really and effectually believe the scripture.

But you will say, how doth the law kill and strike dead the poor creature?

Ans. First, the letter or law doth kill thus; it is set home upon the soul, and discovers to the soul its transgressions against the law; and shews the soul also, that it cannot compleatly satisfy the justice of God, for the breach of this law, therefore it is condemned, John. 3. 19. Mark, he that believeth not is condemned already; to wit by the law, that is, the law doth condemn him, yea, it hath condemned him already

for his sins against it ; as it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them. Gal. 3. 10. Now all men as they come into the world, are in this condition, that is, condemned by the law. Yet not believing their condemnation by the law really, they do not also believe really and effectually the law that doth condemn them. For as men have but a notion of the one, that is, their condemnation, because of sins against the law ; so they have but a notion of the condemning, killing, and destroying power of the law ; for as the one is, so in these things always is the other. There is no man that doth really believe the law or gospel, further than they do feel the power and authority of them in their hearts. Ye err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. Now this letter or law, is not to be taken in the largest sense, but it is strictly to be tied to the ten commandments, whose proper work, is only by shewing the foul its sin against the law, to kill, and there leaves him stark dead, not giving him the least life, or support, or comfort ; but leaves the soul in an helpless and hopeless condition, as from itself or any other meer creature.

'Tis true, the law hath laid all men for dead, as they come into the world ; but all men do not see themselves dead, until they see the law that struck them dead, striking in their souls, and having struck them that fatal blow : As a man that is fast asleep in a house, and that on fire about his ears, and he not knowing of it, because he is asleep : even so, because poor souls are asleep in sin, though the wrath of God, the curse of his law, and the flames of hell have beset them round about, yet they do not believe it, because they are asleep in sin. Now as he that is awakned and sees this, sees, that through this he is a dead man : even so they that do, see their state by nature, being such a sad condition, do also see themselves by that law to be dead men naturally.

But now, when didst thou feel the power of this

first part of the scripture, the law. so mighty as to strike thee dead? If not, thou dost not so much as verily believe that part of scripture that doth contain the law in it, to be the truth of God. Yet if thou shouldst have felt something, I say, something of the killing power of the law of God in thine heart, this is not an argument to prove, that thou believest all the things contained in scripture, for there is gospel as well as law, and therefore I shall speak to that also; that is, whether thou hast felt the power of the gospel as well as something of the power of the law?

1. Then thou hast found the power of the gospel & so believed it, thou hast found it thus with thy soul.

2. Thou hast been shewed by the word or truth of the gospel, in the light of the spirit of Christ, that by nature thou wert without the true faith of the son of God in thy soul: for when he, the spirit is come, he shall shew men that they believe not in me, saith Christ, John 16. 9. Mark, though thou hast, as I said before, felt somewhat of the power of the law, letter or ten commandments, yet as thou hast not been brought to this to see by the spirit in the gospel, that thou art without faith by nature, thou hast not yet tasted, much less believed any part of the gospel. For the gospel and the law are two distinct covenants. And they that are under the law may be convinced by it, and so believe the law or the first covenant, and yet in the mean time, be a stranger to the covenant of promise, that is in the gospel, and so have no hope in them, Ephes. 2. 12. There is not any promise that can be savingly believed, until the soul be by the gospel converted to Jesus Christ. For though men do think never so much that they believe, the things or the word of the gospel of our salvation, yet unless they have the work of grace in their souls they do not, cannot rightly believe the things contained in the scriptures.

Again, as the law killeth those that believe it, even so the promises contained in the gospel, do thro' faith, administer comfort to those that believe it a-

right. My words (saith Christ) my words, they are spirit, and they are life, John 6. 36. As if he had said, the words contained in the law as a covenant of works, they wound, they kill, they strike dead those that are under them. But as for me, the words that I speak unto you they are spirit, and they are life; that is, whosoever doth receive them believingly shall find them full of operation to comfort, quicken, and revive the soul. For as I did not come into the world to destroy mens lives, so the words that I speak (as I am sent to preach the gospel) they have no such tendency unto those that believe them. The promises that are in the gospel, oh, how do they comfort them! Such a promise, and such a promise, oh, how sweet is it! How comfortable to those that believe them! Alas! there are many poor souls that think they believe the scriptures to be the word of God, and yet they never enjoyed any thing of the life and promises; they come in upon the heart to quicken, to revive thee, to raise thee from the sentence of death, that is passed on thee by the law. And thro' the faith that is wrought in thy soul, by the operation of God's holy spirit (though once killed by the law or letter) thou art made alive in the Lord Jesus Christ, who is presented to thy soul in the promises.

3. Dost thou in deed and in truth, believe the scriptures to be the word of God? Then the things contained in them, especially the things of the gospel, are very excellent to thy soul; as the birth of Christ, the death, resurrection, intercession, and second coming. O how precious and excellent are they to thy soul! insomuch, that thou regardest nothing in comparison of them? O it is Christ's birth, death, blood, resurrection, &c. according to the scriptures, that thou dost rejoice in exceedingly, and abundantly desire after! Whom having not seen, ye love, in whom though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, 1 Cor.

15. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. compared with Phil. 3. 6. 7. 8. 1 Pet. 1. 8.

4. Dost thou believe the scriptures to be the word of God? Then thou standest in awe of, and dost much reverence them. Why, they are the word of God; the true sayings of God; they are the counsel of God; they are his promises and his threatings. Poor souls are apt to think, if I could hear God speak to me from heaven with an audible voice, then sure I should be serious and believe it. But truly, if God should speak to thee from heaven, except thou wert converted, thou wouldst not regard, nor really believe him. But if thou dost believe the scriptures thou see'st that they are the truth as really believe them. I tell thee, saith Christ, if they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe tho' one should rise from the dead. But,

5. Dost thou believe the scriptures to be the word of God? Then through faith in Christ thou endeavourest to have thy life squared according to the scriptures, both in word and practice. For the scriptures carry such a blessed beauty in them to that soul that hath faith in the things contained in them, that they do take the heart, and captivate the soul of him that believeth them into the love and liking of them, believing all things that are written in the law and the prophets, and have hope towards God, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust; and herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence, both towards God and towards man, Acts 24. 14. 15. 16.

6. He that believes the scriptures to be the word of God, if he do but suppose that any one place of scripture doth exclude him and shut him out of, and from a share in the promises contained in them; O it will trouble him, grieve him, perplex him; yea, he will not be satisfied until he be resolved, and the contrary sealed to his soul. for he knows that the scriptures are the word of God, all truth; and therefore he knows, that if any one sentence doth exclude

or bar out him for want of this, or the other qualification. For you must know that to him that believes the scripture aright, the promises or threatnings are of more power to comfort or cast down, than all the promises or threatnings of all the men in the world. And this was the cause, why the martyrs of Jesus did so slight both the promises of their adversaries, when they would have overcome them with proffering the great things of this world unto them, and also their threatening when they told them they would rack them, hang them, burn them; Acts 20. 24. None of these things could prevail upon them, or against them; because they did most really believe the scriptures, and the things contained in them; as is clearly found and to be seen in Heb. 11. and also in Mr Fox's records of their brethren.

7. He that believeth the scriptures to be the word of God, believeth that men must be born again, and also be partakers of that faith which is of the operation of God (according as he hath read and believed) or else he must and shall be damned. Now, then because I would not be tedious, I shall at this time lay down no more discoveries of such an one as doth savingly believe the scriptures, and the things contained in them, but shall speak a few words of examination concerning the things already mentioned. As,

1. Thou sayest thou dost in deed and in truth effectually believe the scriptures: I ask therefore, wast thou ever killed stark dead by the law of works contained in the scriptures? Killed by the law or letter, and made to see thy sins against it, and left in an helpless condition by the law? For it doth neither give the soul any comfort itself when it comes, nor doth it shew the soul where comfort is to be had; and therefore it is called the ministration of condemnation, as in 2 Cor. 3. 9. The ministration of death, 2 Cor. 3. 7. For though men may have a notion of the blessed word of God, as the children had, yet before they be converted, it may truly be said of them,

Ye err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God, Mark 12: 24.

2. You say, you do believe the scriptures to be the word of God. I say again, examine, wert thou ever quickned from a dead state by the power of the spirit of Christ through the other part of the scripture; that is to say, by the power of revealing Christ to, and in thee, as having wholly freed thee from thy sins by his most precious blood. Which faith, if thou attain unto will so work in thy heart, that first thou wilt see the nature of the law, and also the nature of the gospel, and delight in the glory of it; and also thou wilt find an ingaging of thy heart and soul to Jesus Christ, even to the giving up of the whole man unto him, to be ruled and governed by him to his glory, and thy comfort by the faith of the LORD JESUS.



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